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Aureæ Sententiæ:

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SELECT SENTENCES

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By T. S.

Thomas Stratton.

The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.
.....Eccles. xii. 11.

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.
.....Prov. xxv. 11.

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.....Ps. xix. 7.

Search the Scriptures.....John v. 39.

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SELECT SENTENCES

Transcribed from

Sundry Eminent Writers.

1 IN the worst of times there is still more cause to complain of an evil heart, than of an evil and corrupt world. *Prov.* xxx. 2.

2 Bold sinning doth afterwards make faint believing. *Ps.* xxxviii. 3, 4, 5.

3 None are more ready to shrink in a day of trouble, than such who at a distance seem most daring. *John* xiii. 37. xviii. 17, 25.
Mr. FLEMING.

4 Places or conditions are happy or miserable, as God vouchsafeth his gracious presence more or less. *Exod.* xxxiii. 14, 15. *Ps.* cxxi. 8. Dr. SIBS.

5 God draweth strait lines, but we think and call them crooked. *Ezek.* xviii. 25.
Mr. RUTHERFOORD.

6 What unthankfulness is it to forget our consolations, and to look only upon matter of grievance; to think so much upon two or three crosses as to forget an hundred blessings! *Ps.* ciii. 2.

7 A good man suffers evil and doth good. *Acts* vii. 59, 60.

A natural man suffers good and doth evil. *Isa.* xxvi. 10.

8 A godly man's comforts and grievances are hid from the world. Natural men are strangers to them. *Prov.* xiv. 10.

9 If there were no enemy in the world, nor devil in hell, we carry that within us, that, if let loose, will trouble us more than all the world beside. *Rom.* vii. 24.

10 Nothing can be very ill with us when all is well within: we are not hurt till our souls are hurt. If the soul itself be out of tune, outward things will do us no more good than a fair shoe to a gouty foot. 1 *Chron.* iv. 10. *Prov.* xxv. 20. *Matth.* x. 28.

11 What we are afraid to do before men, we should be afraid to think before God. *Jer.* xvii. 10.

12 False fears bring true vexations; the imaginary grievances of our lives are more than the real. *Ps.* liii. 5. *Prov.* xxvi. 13.

Dr. Sibs.

13 He that hath slight thoughts of sin, never had great thoughts of God. *Ps.* l. 21.

Dr. Owen.

14 Riches and abundance of the earth loads more than it fills; and men's wealth only heightens their wants. The great man oftener wants a stomach and rest, than the poor wants meat and a bed to lie on. *Eccles.* v. 10, 12. Mr. Fleming.

15 Out of God there is nothing fit for the soul to stay itself upon. *Jer.* xvii. 5, 8. *Ps.* xx. 7.

16 He wants no company, who hath Christ for his companion. *Ps.* lxxiii. 25.

17 Labor to keep out sin, and then let come what will come. *Gen.* xxxix. 9. *Dan.* iii. 16, 17, 18.

18 The wronged side is the safer side. *Prov.* xii. 5.

19 Trust God and be doing, and let him alone with the rest. *Ps.* xxxvii. 3.

20 The depths of misery are never beyond the depths of mercy. *Ephes.* ii. 4, 5. *Ps.* xxxiv. 4, 5. Dr. SIBS.

21 To be morose, implacable, inexorable, and revengeful, is one of the greatest degeneracies of human nature. *Eccles.* vii. 9.

22 He that would be little in temptation, let him be much in prayer. *Matth.* xxvi. 41. Dr. OWEN.

23 When a child of God wants peace, he can have no peace till God speaks it. *Is.* lvii. 19. *Job* xxxiv. 29. Dr. GOODWIN.

24 So far as any are under the power of sin, they are under the power of madness. *Eccles.* ix. 3.

25 In all worldly joys there is a secret wound. *Prov.* xiv. 13. Dr. OWEN.

26 A true believing soul cannot but be a praising soul. *Luke* i. 46 to 55.

27 In all favors, think not of them so

much as God's mercy and love in Christ, which sweetens them. *Jer.* xxxi. 3.

28 God will be our God so long as he is Christ's God, and because he is Christ's God. *John* x. 29. xvii. 10, 21.

29 The whole world cannot weigh against this one comfort, that God is our's. *Ps.* xlvi. Dr. SIBS.

30 For a sinner out of hell not to rest in the will of God, nor to humble himself under his mighty hand, is to make himself guilty of the especial sin of hell. *Jer.* xviii. 6. *Rom.* ix, 20. Dr. OWEN.

31 The grossest defilements of sin can no ways stain religion and the ways of the Lord. *Job.* xxxv. 6, 8. *Ps.* cxix. 160. Mr. FLEMING.

32 All our rest in this world is from trust in God. *Ps.* iv. 8. *Hab.* iii. 17, 18.

33 It is our safest course in every affliction, to lodge the adequate cause of it in our own deserts. *Isa.* lxiv. 6, 7.

34 Abound in actings of faith, and we shall thrive in holiness. 1 *John* iii. 3. *Ps.* xcii. 12.

35 He that loves God sincerely will be like him. 1 *John* iv. 11. Dr. OWEN.

36 True faith is humble, and seeth no way to escape but only in Christ. *John* vi. 68.

37 Grace withereth without adversity. *Heb.* xii. 10, 11. Mr RUTHERFOORD.

38 Faith makes us draw all our comforts from a fountain that will never fail. *Heb.* xiii. 5. *Col.* i. 19. *John* i. 16.

Mr. HALYBURTON.

39 Ignorance of God and ourselves is the great principle and cause of all our disquietments. *Rom.* i. 21, 22. Dr. OWEN.

40 A man can be in no condition wherein God is at a loss, and cannot help him. If comforts be wanting, he can create comforts, not only out of nothing, but out of discomforts. *Jer.* xxxii. 27. Dr. SIBS.

41 No man dare ask of God so much as he is ready and willing to give. *James* i. 5.

42 When we are most ready to perish, then is God most ready to help.

Gen. xxii. 14.

43 It is a matter of faith not to trust to that which the eye seeth, but that which the word promiseth. *Rom.* iv. 18, 19, 20.

Dr. LUTHER.

44 Seek to be pardoned; but above all seek to be beloved. *Ps.* xxv. 11. *Eph.* iii. 19. *Zeph.* iii. 17.

45 They only are wise, who are wise to salvation. *Job* xxviii. 28. 1 *Cor.* i. 20, 24. *Ps.* cxi. 10. Dr. GOODWIN.

46 Nothing but the death of Christ for us, will be the death of sin in us. *Rom.* v. 8. vi. 15. Dr. OWEN.

47 It is the glory of a Christian not to be faint-hearted under trials. *Deut.* xx. 3. *Isa.* xl. 31. *Heb.* xii. 3. *Rev.* ii. 3. Mr. DORNEY.

48 He who prays as he ought, will endeavor to live as he prays. *Prov.* xv. 8. He that can live in sin, and abide in the ordinary duties of prayer, never prays as he ought. A truly gracious praying frame is utterly inconsistent with the love of, or reserve for any sin. *Ps.* lxvi. 18.

49 The least grace is a better security for heaven than the greatest gifts or privileges whatever. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1, 13.

50 It is not the outward profession of the truth, but the inward power of it, that is useful unto the world or the souls of men. *Rev.* iii. 1. Dr. Owen.

51 Let all seen enjoyments lead you to the unseen Fountain whence they flow. 2 *Cor.* iv. 18. *Jer.* xxxi. 3.

52 If once we are sure God hath done a thing, there is no room left to dispute its equity. *Gen.* xviii. 25. *Rom.* ix. 20, 21.

53 We are never engaged to love till the Lord's kindness draw us. *Hos.* xi. 4. *Song* i. 4. 2 *Cor.* v. 14. Mr. Halyburton.

54 Men are out of their right minds till they come by faith and repentance to Christ Jesus. *Luke* xv. 17. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11.

55 It is a sign some beam of heavenly wisdom hath shined into that soul, which findeth itself empty of true saving wisdom. *John* xvi. 8, 9. 2 *Cor.* iv. 6.

Mr. Bain.

56 Unreasonable fears are the sins of our hearts as truly as they are thorns in our sides;

they grieve the Holy Spirit. *Isa.* xlix. 14.
Mr. DAN. BURGESS.

57 The field which hath millions of weeds in it is a cornfield for all that. *Isa.* lvii. 17, 18. *Jer.* xiv. 7.

58 He that exclaims, I am dead, expresseth a conceit he refuteth. *Ps.* lxxxviii. 5. 8.

59 One rose upon a bush, though but a little one, and though not yet blown, proves that which bears it to be a true rose tree. *Rev.* ii. 13, 14. iii. 8.

60 As soon shall heavenly joy enter hell, as a presumptuous sinner's heart. *Deut.* xxix. 19, 20. *Isa.* xxvi. 12. lvii. 21.
Mr. DAN. BURGESS.

61 A Godly man best knows what true and solid pleasure is. *Ps.* cxix. 165. *Prov.* iii. 17. *Luke* x. 20.

62 How sweet is his smile, in whose countenance heaven lieth! *Ps.* xxi. 6. lxiii. 3.
Mr. FLEMING.

63 They who are not some way or other under the power of a design to be like unto God, are every way like the devil. 1 *Cor.* xv. 48. *Eph.* v. 8. 1 *Pet.* ii. 9, 12.

64 If prayer do not constantly endeavor the ruin of sin, sin will ruin prayer. *Job* xxvii. 10. To live in sin and yet to believe the forgiveness of sin is utterly impossible. *Ps.* lxvi. 18, 19.

65 A constant design after the not being of sin is a blessed evidence of a saving faith. *Ps.* lxvi. 18, 19. Dr. OWEN.

66 Sin may entangle the mind and disorder the affections, and yet not be prevalent; but when it hath laid hold on the will it hath the mastery. *Jam.* i. 14, 15. Dr. Owen.

67 He that hath tasted the bitterness of sin will fear to commit it, and he that hath felt the sweetness of mercy will fear to offend it. *Rom.* vi. 1, 2. 2 *Cor.* v. 14.

68 The guilt of one sin is a greater misery than the burden of a thousand crosses. *Heb.* xi. 25. Mr. Charnock.

69 We cannot begin to lead a holy life till we first look to Christ for pardon of sin. *Luke* i. 74, 75.

70 Repentence is the greatest honor next to innocence. 2 *Cor.* vii. 10.

71 The comfort of a Christian lieth not in his own fulness, but in Christ's. *John* i. 16. *Phil.* iv. 13. Mr. Tho. Cole.

72 He that lives in sin and expects happiness hereafter, is like him that soweth cockle and thinks to fill his barn with wheat or barley. *Luke* vi. 44. *Gal.* vi. 7, 8.

73 One leak will sink a ship, and one sin will destroy a sinner. *Gen.* ii. 17. *Ezek.* xviii. 4. Mr. John Bunyan.

74 A sense of God's presence in love is sufficient to rebuke all anxiety and fears in the worst and most dreadful condition. *Ps.* xxiii. 4. *Hab.* iii. 17, 18. Dr. Owen.

75 One minute sooner than God's time would not be his people's mercy. *Exod.* xii. 41. *Ps.* xxxi. 15. Mr. Fleming.

76 Do all, suffer all, expect all, as being in Christ, and not otherwise. *John* xv. 5. *Phil* iv. 13.

77 Men, left to their own wills, will rather go to hell than be beholden to free grace for salvation. *John* v. 40. Mr. E. COLE.

78 Better to be a lost sheep than a goat or swine. *Matth.* x. 26. Mr. MARSHAL.

79 He that thinks to draw saving graces out of natural principles, but spins out his bowels to die in his own web. *Rom.* viii. 8.

80 A believer's heel may be bruised, but his vital parts out of reach. *Zech.* ii 8. 1 *John* v. 18. Mr. ELISHA COLE.

81 He that believeth the gospel with hearty love and liking, as the most excellent truth, will certainly with the like heartiness believe on Christ for his salvation. 1 *Thes.* *i.* 5, 9, 10.

82 Praying only for carnal things, shews a carnal heart, and leaves it carnal. *Hos.* vii. 14. *Jam.* iv. 3. Mr. MARSHAL.

83 It is in vain for God to put off the soul that seeks Him, his kingdom, his righteousness, with lesser things: He knows that cannot be. *Ps.* lxxiii. 25. Mr THO. COLE.

84 To put on the name of Christ, and not to walk in the ways of Christ, what is it else than to prevaricate with the divine name? *Tit.* i. 16. CYPRIAN.

85 He is wise enough who hath learned the gospel: he is altogether out of his senses who seeks saving knowledge any where else;

for here are all treasures. 2 *Tim.* iii. 15, 16.
Bp. DAVENANT.

86 From all past ages, before time began to flow, God hath decreed to confer the grace of salvation by Christ upon us. *Matth.* xxv. 34. *John* xvii. 6, 9, 23.
Mr. JOHN CALVIN.

87 In the name of Jesus the whole gospel lies hid: this name is the light, food, and medicine of the soul. *Song.* i. 3.
GLASSIUS.

88 Job was happier on the dunghill than Adam in paradise. *Job* xix. 25, 26, 27. *Ps.* xlix. 20. O how happily did I fall in Adam, who, after my fall, arose more happily in Christ. *Rom.* v. 17, 19.

89 No man can rejoice in this life and that which is to come: there is a necessity that he who would possess the one must lose the other. 1 *John* ii. 16. *Heb.* xi. 25, 26. *Luke* xvi. 13. AUGUSTINE.

90 Lowliness of mind is not a flower that grows in the fid of nature, but is planted by the finger of God in a renewed heart, and learned of the lowly Jesus. *Matth.* xi. 29.

91 Grace makes a heart-memory, even where there is no good head-memory. *Ps.* cxix. 11.

92 In vain do men pretend to religion while ungodly company is their choice. *Pro.* xiii. 20. *Ps.* cxix 63. Mr. BOSTON.

93 It is safer to be humble with one talent, than proud with ten, yea better to be a

humble worm than a proud angel. *Jam.* iv. 6. *Prov.* xvi. 19. xxix. 23. Mr. FLAVEL.

94 He that is content with just grace enough to get to heaven and escape hell, and desires no more, may be sure he hath none at all, and is far from being made partaker of the divine nature. *Ps.* li. 6. xl. 8. 1 *John* iii. 3. Mr. JOHN JANEWAY.

95 All our present glory consists in our preparation for future glory. *Col.* i. 12. Dr. OWEN.

96 God is faithful, who hath made himself a debtor to us, not by receiving any thing at our hands, but by promising all things to us. *Heb.* xi. 11. AUGUSTINE.

97 He is no Christian that believes not that faith in the person of Christ is the spring of all evangelical obedience. 2 *Cor.* v. 14. Dr. OWEN.

98 Live not so much upon the comforts of God as upon the God of comforts. *Ps.* lxiii. 3. Mr. MASON.

99 Poor worldlings! what will ye do when the span-length of your forenoon's laughter is ended, and when the weeping side of providence is turned to you? *Luke* vi 24.

100 Old age, and waxing old as a garment, is written on the fairest face of the creation. *Ps.* cii. 26.

101 What misery to have both, a bad way all the day, and no hopes of lodging at night. *Prov.* xiv, 12, 32.

102 Sin's joys are but night-dreams, thoughts, imaginations, and shadows. *Rom.* vi. 21. *Eccles.* i. 7, 8, 9, 10.

103 Having gotten Christ, it is not possible to keep him peaceably, except the devil were dead. 1 *Pet.* v. 7, 8, 9.

Mr. Rutherfoord.

104 If there were no other argument for the corruption of our nature, the cold and indifferent way that we praise God for Christ is a demonstration of it. *Isa.* liii. 1.

Mr. M'Laurin.

105 He is no true believer to whom sin is not the greatest burden, sorrow, and trouble. *Rom.* vii. 24.

106 He that loves Jesus Christ most, is most like unto God. *John* xvi. 27.

Dr. Owen.

107 A may-be of mercy is a sufficient ground for our reliance, and support of the soul upon God. 2 *Kings* xix. 4. *Zeph.* ii. 3. *Amos* v. 15.

108 He is too covetous whom God cannot suffice: he hath all things that hath him that hath all things. *Rom.* viii. 32.

Mr. Bridge.

109 Such as know God's glorious holiness, and their own sorry righteousness, will despair of themselves, and never venture with their briers and thorns upon a consuming fire. *Isa.* xxvii. 4, 5. *Heb.* vi. 8. *Phil.* iii. 8.

Mr. Jenks.

110 Faith takes hold on something that is material, and makes the soul triumph in hope. *Heb.* xi. 1. Mr. Tho. Cole.

111 Internal conformity unto the habitual grace and holiness of Christ is the fundamental design of a Christian life. *Rom.* viii. 29. xii. 2. 1 *Pet.* ii. 22. Dr. Owen.

112 A Godlike man is the only Godly man; a Christlike nature brought into the soul doth only denominate a man a true Christian. *Phil.* ii. 5. 1 *Pet.* iv. 1.

Mr. Shaw.

113 An atheist, that denies the being of God, doth not so much affront him as a natural man that owns his being, but walks as if there was no God, as if he were not a just and righteous God. *Tit.* i. 16. *Rom.* ii.

Mr. Charnock.

114 God's word only is our true religion, as the divine rule; but our confession, books, words, and lives, shew how we understand it. *Isa.* liii. 1. *Hos.* xiv. 9. *Isa.* xxix. 11, 12. Mr. Tho. Cole.

115 It is not perhaps so heinous an idolatry to set up a graven image, a senseless and a sinless stock, or stone, as for a man to set up his own sinful, corrupt affections, and devote himself to a compliance with them in opposition to the righteous will of God. *Jer.* xliv. 16, 17, 28.

Mr. Charnock.

116 A real inclination of soul to seek after the precepts of God, to do and to walk

after them, is an infallible sign of a child of God. *Ps.* cxix. 94. Mr. Tho. Cole.

117 The vilest thing is sin, the basest thing is a sinner; yea, sinners are not properly creatures of God's making, but are vile things of the devil's and their own making. the only shameful thing in God's world. When a sinner hath his eyes opened to see himself, he loaths himself, and thinks he is enough to pollute and defile and burden the whole creation of God: he abhors himself, and thinks that every one, especially the godly, should abhor him too; but mainly he thinks and judges himself most justly loathsome to God. *Rom.* vii. 24. *Ps.* xxxviii. 4, 5. *Prov.* xxx. 2.

Mr. Trail.

118 Sin not only debaseth the soul, but defiles it also; and indeed there is nothing else that can defile it. *Mat.* xv. 20. For the soul is a most pure beam, bearing the image of the Father of lights; as far surpassing the sun in pureness as the sun doth a clod of earth; and yet all the dirt in the world cannot defile the sun; all the clouds that seek to muffle it, it scatters them all: but sin hath defiled the soul; yea, one sin, the least, defiles it in an instant, totally, eternally. *Eccles.* vii. 25. *Ps.* li. 5. 1 *John* iii. 8. Dr. Goodwin.

119 By the death of Christ we are greatly stirred up, both to a caution against, and a detestation of sin; for that must needs be

deadly which could be healed no other way than by the death of Christ. Who therefore, seriously considering that his sins could be no other ways expiated than by the death of the Son of God himself, would not tremble to tread as it were this most precious blood under foot by daily sinning! 2 *Cor.* v. 14. 1 *Pet.* i. 19. *Heb.* ix. 14, 28. x. 4, 5. Bp. DAVENANT.

120 Adam, turning aside from that strait line prescribed to him, lost, for himself and all his posterity, that beauty of the image of God after which he was created; and, while by an impassable way he affected a forbidden equality with the Diety, was made most like to the devil, and, like that malignant spirit, by his own evil act deformed himfelf, than which, nothing more horrid or filthy can be conceived. The soul of a sinner is an horrible monster, without form and without light; nothing there but mere darkness, mere confusion; all things torn and thrown down, nothing rightly placed; first things take the place of last, and lowest things of highest.. If any one could have a clear view of himself, according to his inward disposition, in an undeceiving glass, he would fly from himself as from the most frightful apparition, with the utmost horror. And indeed, if holiness be the most beautiful ornament of the divine perfections, that must needs be most filthy which is not only most unlike to that beauty, but is diametrically opposite

thereunto. This is that filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness mentioned by *James*, chap. i. 21, by which it comes to pass that man is abominable to God, who cannot but turn away the glorious eyes of his most pure holiness from him. *Job* xxv. 4. *Ps.* xlv. 7.

HERMAN WITSIUS.

121 But and if I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin my mother nourished me in her womb, where, I pray thee, O my God, where and when, O Lord, was I, thy servant, innocent? *Ps.* li. 5. lviii. 3.

AUGUSTINE.

122 Who is there that considereth aright the vanity, darkness, and ignorance of his mind, the perverseness and stubbornness of his will, with the disorder, irregularity, and distemper of his affections, with respect unto things spiritual and heavenly, who is not ashamed of, who doth not abhor himself? This is that which hath given our nature its leprosy, and defiled it throughout. And he who hath no experience of spiritual shame and self-abhorrency on account of this inconformity of his nature, and the faculties of his soul, unto the holiness of God, is a great stranger to the whole work of sanctification. Who is there that can recount the unsteadiness of his mind in holy meditation, his low and unbecoming conceptions of God's excellencies, his proneness to foolish imaginations and vanities that profit not, his aversation to spirituality in duty and fixed-

ness in communion with God, his proneness to things sensual and evil, all arising from the spritual irregularity of our natural faculties; but if ever he had any due apprehensions of divine purity and holiness, that is not sensible of his own vileness and baseness, and is not oftentimes deeply affected with shame thereon? *Isa.* lxiv. 6. *Dan.* ix. 4.

Dr. Owen.

123 Sinful man is not only blind, but is in love with his blindness; he boast that he sees when he is most of all blind, and with all his might resists that true light, which by the works of divine providence, by the word of God, and some sparkling beams of the Spirit, most kindly offers itself. *John* ix. 40, 41. Mr. Herm. Witsius.

124 The Son of God bearing the punishment of the sins of the elect and believers in our nature, declares the sinfulness of sin more than the torments of hell will, where wicked men and angels shall suffer the punishment of their own sins to all eternity. And sinners going to Christ for justification, santification, and salvation, by his righteousness and Spirit, includes an acknowledgment, 1. that they deserve damnation; 2. that of all creatures, except devils, they are farthest from the kingdom of heaven. *Luke* xv. 18, 19, 21. Mr. Glascock.

125 There is no greater discovery of the depravation of our natures by sin, and degeneracy of our wills from their original

rectitude, than that, whereas we are so prone to the love of other things, and therein do seek for satisfaction to our souls, where it is not to be obtained, it is so hard and difficult to raise our souls unto the love of God. Were it not for that depravation, He would always appear as the only suitable and satisfactory object unto our souls and affections. *Ps.* xvi. 11. 2 *Tim.* iii. 4. *Jer.* ii. 25.

126 Who is there that hath a serious reverence of God, with any due apprehensions of his holiness, and a clear conviction of the evil nature of sin, who is not able to call over such actings in childhood (which most think meet to connive at) wherein they may remember that perversity whereof they are now ashamed? *Job* xiii. 26. xx. 11.

Dr. Owen.

127 Men's sins are innumerable, yet they are but ciphers to the vast sums of grace which are every day expended; because they are finite, but mercy is infinite. *Rom.* v. 20. *Ps.* ciii. 17. Mr. Charnock.

128 What should a sinner do, but go to Christ? what can become of a sinner if Christ receive him not? yea, what is a Saviour of sinners for, but for receiving sinners and saving them from their sins? and yet sinners coming unto Christ, and Christ's welcoming of them, makes unbelievers murmur both against Christ and believers. So sure it is that no man can see any glory

in that grace of Christ that he hath no sight or sense of his own need of. *Matth.* i. 21. *Luke* xx. 2. *Mark* ii. 17.

129 Every believer's experience witnesseth to this, that every one that believes on Jesus Christ, acts that faith as the chief of sinners: every man that seeth himself rightly, thinks so of himself, and therein thinks not amiss. God only knows who is truly the greatest sinner, and every humbled sinner will think he is the man. *Prov.* xxx. 2.

130 There are no saving views of God but in Christ, and there are no gracious views God hath of men but in Christ. If we look on God out of Christ, we are dazzled with an overwhelming, confounding majesty; if God look on us out of Christ, he seeth hateful and hated sinners. *Eph.* ii. 12, 13, 14. Mr. Trail.

131 Well may we wonder that the great God should stoop so low, to enter into such a covennant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinful dust and ashes, as we are. This is the wonderment of angels, a torment of devils, and the glory of our nature and persons, and will be matter of admiration and praising God to us for all eternity. *Ps.* ciii. 1, 2, 3. 1 *John* iv. 9. *Rev.* v. 9, 10. Dr. Sibs.

132 The Lord Jesus Christ is such a Saviour as became the grace, mercy, love,

wisdom, holiness, righteousness, justice, and power of God to provide; and, on the other hand, such a Saviour as became sinner's needs, and desires, and therefore deserves their acceptance, as fit, suitable, sufficient to save all that come to God through him, and that even to the utmost; his blood being able to cleanse from all sin, his power being able to subdue all things to himself, and his Spirit sufficient to lead into all truth. *Ps.* lxxxix. 19. *John* xvi. 13.

Mr. HALYBURTON.

133 O how marvellous a contrivance is there where the blessed majesty of God finds an argument in Himself, when man had none wherewithal to plead! the Son was found in the form of a servant, and became our nearest kinsman to redeem the inheritance, where his people's standing is ensured by another surety and strength than their own; not on their apprehending, but their being apprehended; where the Lord does oblige himself by bond to make that good which is only of grace, and is most freely given; where he both frames the desire within the soul and satisfies it. *Isa.* xlv. 24. *Jer.* iii. 19. *Ezek.* xvi. 4, 9.

Mr. FLEMING.

134 The fountain of mercy is God's love to us from eternity, which inclined to us when we were hateful; when he had determined to manifest this love to us, then according to mercy he saved us. Grace and

mercy, and his giving Christ, all is from hence. He so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, &c. *John* iii. 16.

Mr. BAIN.

135 Jesus Christ is so high in dignity that no worth can recommend any creature to Him; therefore He takes them that are under his feet, poor sinners upon whom He can tread as upon those in hell; and he can love them heartily and familiarly, make them his queen, set them at his own right hand.—Therefore be not discouraged, though you be laid never so low at his feet in a sense of your own vileness; for it is all one to Jesus Christ. The truth is, He hath none else to marry but those that are under his feet. He must have no wife if He have not those that are perfect slaves: yea, if He will have the sons of men, He must have enemies, upon whom He might tread, and trample under his feet. *Deut.* vii. 7. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 22, 32.

Mr. GOODWIN.

136 All my hope, as to freedom from that darkness which is my burden, is from Christ's prophetical office, and my hope of freedom from the guilt, pollution, and power of sin, and acceptation with God, arises from his kingly and priestly offices. In one word, I have no hopes of any mercy, in time or eternity, but only through Him: it is through Him I expect all, from the least drop of water to the immense riches of glory. *Luke* xxiv. 45. 1 *Cor.* viii. 6. *Heb.* ix. 28.

Mr. HALYBURTON.

137 Free grace is God's darling, which He loves to advance ; and it is never more advanced than when it beautifies the most misshapen souls. 1 *Tim.* i. 14, 15.

Mr. CHARNOCK.

138 Two things may quiet any man's conscience under the greatest guilt. 1. Is there not a sufficient sacrifice ? is there not satisfaction and atonement in the blood of Christ ? is not this a sufficient sacrifice ? 2. Is it not thine ? This I know unbelief is apt to stagger at: but therefore do but lay thy hand upon the head of the sacrifice, confess thy sins over the head of thy burnt-offering, lay thy burdens upon Him by faith, and He is thine, and all that He hath done and suffered was for thee, and shall be as effectual for thy good, as available and effectual with the Lord for thee, as if thou thyself hadst suffered, yea, infinitely more. *Lev.* i. 4. *Rom.* viii. 1. *John* vi. 35, 37. x. 27, 28, 29. Mr. S. MATHER.

139 If Satan lay to my charge ; although in Christ Jesus thou hast satisfied the punishment which thy sins have deserved, and hast put on his righteousness by faith, yet thou canst not deny but thy nature is corrupt, so that thou art prone to all evil, and thou hast in thee the seeds of all vices : Against this temptation this answer is sufficient, That, by the goodness of God, not only perfect righteousness, but even the holiness of Christ also, is imputed and given unto me, as if I had neither committed any sin, neither were there

any blot or corruption cleaving to me. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *Song.* iv. 7. BASTINGIUS.

140 The law presseth on a man till he flies to Christ; then it says, Thou hast gotten a refuge, I forbear to follow thee: thou art wise; thou art safe. Gal. iii. 13, 24. BENGELIUS.

141 *Question.* How art thou righteous before God?

Answer. By faith alone in Jesus Christ; so that although my own conscience do accuse me that I have grievously offended against all the commandments of God, and have not kept any one of them, moreover also that I am prone to all evil, yet notwithstanding (so that I embrace these benefits with true affiance of mind) without any merit of my own, of the mere mercy of God, the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is imputed and given unto me as if I never had committed any sin, neither were there any blot or corruption cleaving unto me; yea, as if I myself had perfectly performed that obedience which Christ hath performed for me. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *Rom.* x. 4. HEIDELB. CATECHISM.

142 The truth is, the satisfaction of Christ is the foundation of pardon; this satisfaction lies in the expiatory sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross: hence expiation or atonement is joined with pardon in Scripture. *Numb.* xv. 25. *Lev.* iv. 20. The priest was to make atonement that the sin might

be forgiven. An expiatory sacrifice led the way to forgiveness under the law. And so it does now under the gospel. Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins: If you have not the blood of Christ in your eye when you go to God for pardon, never think to speed. *Matth.* xxvi. 28. *Heb.* ix. 22. Mr. Tho. Cole.

143 No comfortable, refreshing thoughts of God, no warrantable or acceptable boldness in an approach and access unto Him, can any one entertain or receive, but in the exercise of faith on Christ as the Mediator between God and man. And if, in the practice of religion, this regard of faith unto Him, this acting of faith on God through Him, be not the principle whereby the whole is animated and guided, Christianity is renounced, and the vain cloud of natural religion embraced in the room of it. Not a verbal mention of Him, but the real intention of heart to come unto God through Him, is required of us; and therein all expectation of acceptance with God, as unto our persons or duties, is resolved. *Gal.* ii. 20. *Eph.* ii. 18. Dr. Owen.

144 The law admits of no pardon, allows of none; it is not at all concerned about that matter, but seeks its own satisfaction in a way of strict justice; the law is all for justice: mercy comes in by another covenant. It was never in the nature and constitution of the law to give life to a sinner;

the law cannot do that : it can give life to a righteous man but not to a sinner ; the law will prosecute him to death : it would act contrary to itself, to its own declared judgment and eternal sanction, if it should do otherwise. *Gen.* ii. 17. *Ezek.* xviii. 4. *Rom.* viii. 3. Mr. Tho. Cole.

145 Grace pleaseth a believer so well, that he cannot but study to please God in all things ever after ; the law of grace constrains him. 2 *Cor.* v. 14.

146 While we endeavor to prepare our way to Christ by holy qualifications, we do rather fill it with stumbling-blocks and deep pits, whereby our souls are hindered from ever attaining to the salvation of Christ. Christ would have us to believe on Him that justifies the ungodly, and therefore He doth not require us to be godly before we believe : he came as a physician for the sick, and doth not expect they should recover their health in the least degree before they come to Him. The vilest sinners are fitly prepared and qualified with this design, which is to shew forth the exceeding riches of grace, pardoning our sins and saving us freely. *Eph.* ii. 5, 7. It is no affront to Christ, or slighting or contemning the justice and holiness of God, to come to God while we are polluted sinners ; but rather it is an affronting and contemning the saving grace, merit, and fulness of Christ, if we endeavor to make ourselves righteous and holy before we re-

ceive Christ himself, and all holiness and righteousness in Him by faith. *Matth.* xi. 28. Mr. MARSHAL.

147 The suretiship-righteousness of Christ, which is through faith upon believers, is his perfect conformity to the moral law in all that which the justice of God did by virtue thereof demand in behalf of the elect from Christ as their surety, that they might, not only in a way of grace, but in a way of justice, be brought to that eternal blessedness and glory whereto God in his infinite love had appointed them. *Gal.* iv. 4. *Rom.* iii. 26. Mr. NATH. MATHER.

148 God's infinite goodness, grace, mercy, and love, are infinitely glorified in the gift of Christ an infinite Saviour; his infinite justice and holiness, in justifying a believer by his infinitely meritorious righteousness. A believer is more honourably justified by the infinitely meritorious righteousness of Christ imputed to him; than an angel by his inherent, perfect, personal righteousness, which is but the obedience of a finite person: a believer is more honourably sanctified by that grace which is the purchase of Christ's infinite merit, and the fruit of his Spirit dwelling in him, than an angel by that grace which is the gift only of God's creating bounty. *Isa.* xlii. 21. Mr. GLASCOCK.

149 The righteousness of the law in a strick legal sence (for I must be forced to

distinguish, I know many in this age will not understand me, but they that have ears to hear let them hear) I say the righteousness of the law in a strict legal sense admits of no degrees, it must be perfect or none. It is true, a gradual tendency towards the exact righteousness of the law is commendable in any; but, because it is not a fulfilling of the law, the law will not reward it, but punish that man as a sinner, not because he goes so far in his obedience, but because he goes no farther. A man may do many things; but, if he doth not always do every thing that is right in the law, the law will curse that man, and his former righteousness shall not be remembered. *Ez.* xviii. 24. *Deu.* xxvii. 26. *Gal.* iii. 10, 11. Mr. T. Cole.

150 True justifying faith puts the soul (as sensible of its lost condition by the law) upon flying for refuge unto Christ's righteousness, (which righteousness of his is not an act of grace by which he makes our obedience accepted with God for justification, but his personal obedience to the law in doing and suffering for us what that required at our hands.) This righteousness true faith accepteth, under the skirt of which the soul being shrouded, and by it presented as spotless before God, it is accepted, and acquitted from condemnation. *Phil.* iii. 8, 9.

Mr. John Bunyan.

151 The transcendent graciousness of the gospel covenant consists not in requiring less

righteousness, to give title to life, than was due at first; but in not riquiring a perfect righteousness personally for that end, but providing and accepting that of a surety, according to the apostle. *Rom.* viii. 3, 4. The law could not give us life, because, being weakened by sin, we could not perform the perfect righteousness which is required: but what the law could not do, Christ has done, giving us a title to life, fulfilling the righteousness of the law on our behalf. *Rom.* x. 4. 1 *Cor.* i. 30.

Mr. CLARKSON.

152 The redeeming power of the blood of Christ is greater than the condemning power of sin. This excellency it hath from the dignity of his person (for it is the blood of God, *Acts* xx. 28.) which makes his obedience and sufferings give more glory to God than our suffering in hell would have done. *Isa.* xlii. 21. *Rom.* v. 17.

Mr. SAM. MATHER.

153 Some are all their days laying the foundation, and are never able to build upon it to any comfort to themselves or usefulness to others. And the reason is, because they will be mixing with the foundation, stones that are only fit for the following building. They will be bringing their obedience, duties, mortification of sin, and the like, unto the foundation. These are precious stones to build with, but unmeet to be first laid to bear upon them the whole

weight of the building. The foundation is to be laid in mere grace, mercy, pardon in the blood of Christ; this the soul is to accept of and to rest in merely as it is grace, without the consideration of any thing in itself, but that it is sinful and obnoxious to ruin. This it finds a difficulty in, and would gladly have something of its own to mix with it: it cannot tell how to fix these foundation-stones without some cement of its own endeavors and duty: and because these things will not mix, they spend a fruitless labor about it all their days. But if the foundation be of grace, it is not at all of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. If any thing of our own be mixed with grace in this matter, it utterly destroys the nature of grace, which, if it be not alone, it is not at all. *Rom.* xi. 6. *Eph.* ii. 8, 9.

Dr. Owen.

154 To take up mercy, pardon, and forgiveness, absolutely on the account of Christ, and then to yield all obedience in the strength of Christ, and for the love of Christ, is the life of a believer. 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. *Phil.* iv. 13. Dr. Owen.

155 When thy conscience is thoroughly afraid with the remembrance of thy sins past, and the devil assaileth thee with great violence, going about to overwhelm thee with heaps, floods, and whole seas of sins, to terrify thee, and draw thee from Christ, then arm thyself with such sentences as these:

Christ, the Son of God was given, not for the holy, righteous, worthy, and such as were his friends; but for the wicked sinners, for the unworthy, and for his enemies. Wherefore, if Satan say, Thou art a sinner, and therefore must be damned; then answer thou, and say, Because thou sayest I am a sinner, therefore will I be righteous and be saved: and if he reply, Nay, but sinners must be damned; then answer thou, and say, No; for I fly to Christ, who hath given himself for my sins; and therefore, Satan, in that thou sayest I am a sinner, thou givest me armor and weapons against thyself, that with thine own sword I may cut thy throat, and tread thee under my feet. *Matth.* xi. 28. *Rom.* v. 6, 8.

Dr. LUTHER.

156 We shall be sure to meet with the devil, with conscience, with wicked men, and with the law of God, in our way to heaven, and we can deal with none of them but by that righteousness which hath satisfied all; let us bring that along with us, and they will all flee before it. If a sinner comes in his own righteousness, shut him out, saith God; so saith conscience, so saith the law, so saith the devil: but when one comes clothed with the righteousness of Christ, let him in, saith God; so saith conscience, so saith the law, and let the devil say a word, to the contrary if he dare. *Rom.* v. 1. *Phil.* iii. 9. *Gal.* iii. 10, 11. Mr. THO. COLE.

157 The grace of God is little beholden to that doctrine which would give the glory of it to a graceless thing [free-will] ; and as little have the souls of men to thank it for : it feeds them with dreams and fancies which, when they awake, will leave them hardly bestead and hungry. Therefore sit not down under the shadow of that gourd, it hath a worm at the root. And they will not be held guiltless, nor kept from the schorching sun, whoever they be that shelter themselves in the covert of it : it is a spark of men's own kindling, wherewith though compassed round, they will lie down in sorrow. *Isa.* l. 11. *Gal.* i. 15. *Rom.* ix. 16.

Mr. Elisha Cole.

158 Our faith, our repentance, our obedience, being sinfully defective, cannot, as such, make any thing due to us but punishment, and so cannot oblige the Lord to perform the promises to justify, pardon, or save us : for that which obliges the Lord to execute the threatning cannot oblige him to fulfil his promise. How then is the Lord obliged ? how come the promises to be accomplished ? Not upon the account of our defective performances, but for Christ's sake, and so through grace. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 22, 32. Mr. Clarkson.

159 The commemoration of the covenant of works at Sinai was made to convince the Israelites of their sin and misery, to drive them out of themselves, to teach them

the necessity of satisfaction, and to compel them to Christ; and so is subservient to the covenant of grace. *Rom.* iii. 20. *Gal.* iii. 24. HERM. WITSIUS.

160 When any person comes practically to know how great a thing it is for an apostate sinner to obtain the remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, endless objections, through the power of unbelief, will arise unto his disquietment. Wherefore that which is principally suited to give him rest, peace, and satisfaction, and without which nothing else can do so, is the due consideration of, and the acting faith upon that infinite effect of divine wisdom and goodness in the constitution of the person of Christ. This, at first view, will reduce the mind unto that conclusion, If thou canst believe, all things are possible. For what end cannot be effected hereby? what end cannot be accomplished that was designed in it? Is any thing too hard for God? Did God ever do any thing like this, or make use of any such means for any other end whatever? Against this no objection can arise. On this consideration of Him faith apprehends Christ to be, as indeed he is, the power of God and the wisdom of God unto the salvation of them that do believe, and therein doth it find rest with peace. *Mic.* vi. 6, 7, 8. vii. 18. *Dan.* ix. 24.

Dr. OWEN.

161 From the intimate conjunction that

is between Christ and the church it is just and equal in the sight of God, according to the rules of his eternal righteousness, that what he did and suffered in the discharge of his office should be esteemed, reckoned, and imputed unto us, as unto all the fruits and benefits of it, as if we had done and suffered the same things ourselves. *Isa.* liii. 5, 6.

162 By virtue of his union with the church, which of his own accord he entered into, and his undertaking therein to answer for it in the sight of God, it was a righteous thing with God to lay the punishment of all our sins upon Him, so as that he might freely and graciously pardon them all, to the honor and exaltation of his justice as well as of his grace and mercy. *Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26. *Ps.* lxxxv. 10. Dr. Owen.

163 God's great design, in the method of salvation made choice of by infinite wisdom, was to stain the pride of all glory, that no flesh might glory in his sight, but that he that glorieth should glory only in the Lord. *Jer.* ix. 24. 1 *Cor.* i. 30.

Mr. Halyburton.

164 In his cross were divine holiness and vindictive justice exercised and manifested, and through his triumph grace and mercy are exerted to the utmost. This is that glory which ravisheth the hearts and satiates the souls of them that believe. In due apprehension hereof let my soul live, in the

faith hereof let me die, and let present admiration of this glory make way for the eternal enjoyment of it in its beauty and fulness. *Heb.* x. 12. *Col.* i. 20. *Eph.* iii. 18. *Rom.* xi. 33. Dr. Owen.

165 It is a vain and a foolish thing to seek for the justification of a sinner without satisfaction to the justice of God, which he can never give but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him. While justice remains unsatisfied, it will overthrow all other grounds of hope for justification, which we may take up from our own works and doings. The justice of God strikes an unjustified sinner under the curse, and so leaves him in a condemned state. *John.* iii. 18. Mr. Tho. Cole.

166 If any thing ought to be accounted worthy of the most attentive consideration, it is indeed the covenant of grace. Here a way is shewn unto a better paradise than the earthly, and to a more certain and more stable happiness than that from which Adam fell. Here new hopes shine upon ruined mortals, which by so much ought the more to be acceptable, by how much it came more unexpected. Here conditions are offered, to which eternal life is annexed; conditions not again by us to be performed, which would cause the mind to despond; but by Him who departed not this life, before He had truly said, It is finished. *Rom.* x. 4.

Mr. Herman Witsius.

167 Justifying faith consisteth in the heart's approbation of the way of justification and salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ proposed in the gospel, as proceeding from the grace, wisdom, and love of God, with its acquiescence therein as to its own concernment and condition. *John* xi. 25, 26, 27.

Dr. Owen.

168 God never made the covenant of works with any man since the fall, either with expectation that he should fulfil it, or to give him life by it; for God never appoints any thing to an end to which it is utterly unsuitable and improper. Now the law, as it is a covenant of works, is become weak and unprofitable to the purpose of salvation, and therefore God never appointed it to man, since the fall, to that end. And besides, it is manifest that the purpose of God, in the covenant made with Abraham, was to give life and salvation by grace and promise; and therefore his purpose, in renewing the covenant of works, was not, neither could be, to give life and salvation by working, for then there would have been contradictions in the covenants, and instability in Him that made them. *Rom.* viii. 3. *Gal.* ii. 21. iii. 17, 18, 19. Marr. Mod. Divin.

169 It is certain in experience, that with a poor and slender *It may be*, at the first, many a soul hath cast anchor within the veil blindfold, and yet in the end have found a firm and sure holdfast in the heart of God

and the grace of Christ to hang upon with the whole weight of their soul, the weight of their sins hanging upon them also with all their pondus. *Luke* xxiii. 42. *Matth.* viii. 2. *Zeph.* ii. 3. Dr. GOODWIN.

170 Our faith, or act of believing, cannot be the matter of justification, for that it is an imperfect thing, and so cannot be reckoned in the place of perfect righteousness : for it must be a righteousness perfectly perfect, that justifies, as it was a sin perfectly sinful that condemned. This righteousness also must be our own in a way of right, (as Adam's sin also was) though performed in the person of another : Christ and Adam being parallels in their headship, the imputation of one's guiltiness and the other's righteousness are righteously applied to their respective seeds. And this was a main end of God's putting those he would justify into Christ : That He being made sin and a curse for them, they might be made the righteousness of God in him ; and so God might be just in justifying them. *Rom.* iii. 24, 25, 26. Mr. ELISHA COLE.

171 Though we and our best works are vile, yet the Lord, looking upon the forehead of our High-priest, sees holiness engraven there ; looking upon the face of Christ, He there also beholds it for us, and becomes well-pleased with us ; and we, in the faith thereof, may be persuaded and assured of our acceptance with the Lord

through the faith of Him. Thou that sayest there is nothing but sin in me, sin and vileness in all I do; I answer, It is true, the Lord can see nothing but sin in thee; but he cannot look upon the High-priest but there he sees holiness, yea, the holiness of Jehovah there. *Exod.* xxviii. 38.

Mr. S. MATHER.

172 Let us see what matter of support and encouragement faith may fetch from Christ's death for justification; and furely that which hath long ago satisfied God himself for the sins of many thousands now in heaven, may very well serve to satisfy the heart and conscience of any sinner now upon earth in any doubts, in respect of the guilt of sin, that can arise. The apostle, after that large discourse of justification by Christ's righteousness, in the former part of the epistle to the Romans, and having shewed how every way it abounds, *chap.* v. in *chap.* viii. sits down, as it were, like a man over-convinced, as *ver.* 31, "What then shall we say to these things?" He speaks as one satisfied, and even astonished, with abundance of evidence having nothing to say, but only to admire God and Christ in this work; and therefore presently throws down the gauntlet, and challengeth a dispute with all comers: Let conscience, carnal reason, law, sin, hell, and devils, bring all their strength, "Who is he that shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? who shall condemn?"

Paul dares to answer them all, and carry it with these few words, "It is God that justifies; It is Christ that died; and, as in verse 37, In all these things we are more than conquerors." And so likewise the author of Psalm 130, when his soul was in deep distress by reason of his sins, *ver.* 1, 2, yet this was it that set his soul to wait upon God, That there was plenteous redemption with Him. Christ's redemption is not merely a price or ransom equivalent, or making a due satisfation according to the just demerit of sin; but is plenteous redemption; there is abundance of the gift of righteousness, and unsearchable riches of Christ: yea, 1 *Tim.* i. 14, The Grace of our Lord (that is of Christ) was [we translate it] abundant; but the word reacheth farther, It was overfull, redundant, more than enough; and yet says Paul, I had sins enough to pardon, one would think to exhaust it, I was a blasphemer, *&c.* but I found so much grace in Christ, even more than I knew what to do withal. 1 *Tim.* i. 13, 14, 15.

173. Is Christ God's beloved, with and in whom he is well pleased? And is he not thy beloved? What is the matter? Is thy narrow soul more curious about an object of its love than God himself is? O let him be to each of us our beloved! If He be God's beloved, He may as well be thine. Is He able to satisfy God's vast thoughts, and is He not able to satisfy thee, poor creature? God

himself is satisfied and at rest in Him. Says Christ, *Prov.* viii. 30, I was daily his delight. And wouldst thou be happier than God is? Is he God's beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased? and wilt thou be pleased in any thing but Christ? *Ps.* lxxiii. 25. *Phil.* iii. 8. Dr. GOODWIN.

174 There is a far greater power in the blood of Christ to save and cleanse than in sin to defile and destroy, *Rom.* viii. 3. The law became weak to do good, but it hath power to condemn. The strength of sin is the law; the law gives strength to sin, because, by virtue of the curse of the law, sin reigns and defiles the souls of men, through that righteous curse, 'The soul that sins shall die.' But the blood of Jesus Christ hath greater power to save, than sin (together with the law) hath to condemn. For the blood of Christ takes away and abolisheth it utterly: where this blood is applied and brought home, sin itself cannot ruin that soul. The soul is poisoned and corrupted by sin; but the blood of Christ takes away that poison, and makes the soul pure and holy, as if it had never sinned. Therefore as to those discouragements, 'I shall never get power against these corruptions, They will be my ruin; these are deep reflectings on Jesus Christ, as if sin were stronger than He; as if thy sin were more powerful to damn thee than Christ is to save thee. *John* i. 29. 1 *John* i. 7. iii. 5. S. MATHER.

175 An approbation of God's way of saving sinners by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace, I take to be the true scriptural notion of justifying faith. And it really gives Him that glory which he designed by all this contrivance, the glory of his wisdom, grace, mercy, and truth. *Rom.* iii. 24, 26. Mr. HALYBURTON.

176 Whensoever thou hast to do in the matter of justification, and disputest with thyself, how God is to be found that justifieth and accepteth sinners, where and in what sort He is to be sought, then know thou that there is no other God but the man Christ Jesus. Embrace Him and cleave to Him with thy whole heart, setting aside all curious speculations of the Divine Majesty. For he that is a searcher of God's majesty shall be overwhelmed of his glory. I know by experience what I say. Christ himself saith, *Joh.* xiv. 6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." Therefore, besides this way Christ, thou shalt find no other way to the Father, but wandering; no truth, but hypocrisy; no life, but eternal death. Wherefore mark this well in the matter of justification, that, when any of us shall have to wrestle with the law, sin, death, and all other evils, we must look upon no other God but only this God incarnate, and clothed with man's nature. *Eph.* ii. 18. *Col.* i. 15, 20. Dr. LUTHER.

177 How shall faith triumph in this! Is not our High-priest in the sanctuary? Is He not clothed with garments of salvation and righteousness? And doth he not bear the names of his people upon his shoulders and upon his breast before the Lord? Thy particular concernments (if thou art a believer) are written upon his heart, with the pen of a diamond, in such lasting letters of loving-kindness as shall never be blotted out. *Isa.* xlix. 16. Mr. Sam. Mather.

178 It is not the righteous and godly man, but the sinful and ungodly man, that Christ came to call, justify, and save. So that if you were a righteous and godly man, you were never capable of calling, justifying, or saving by Christ; but being a sinful and ungodly man, I will be bold to say unto you, as the people said unto blind Bartimeus, "Be of good comfort, Arise, He calleth thee," and will justify and save thee. Go then unto Him, I beseech you; and if He come and meet you (as his manner is) then do not unadvisedly say with Peter, Depart from me, O Lord! for I am a sinful man; but say in plain terms, O come unto me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! yea, go farther, and say as Luther bids you, Most gracious Jesus, and sweet Christ, I am a poor miserable sinner, and therefore do judge myself unworthy of thy grace; but yet, having learned from thy word that thy salvation belongeth to such an one, there-

fore do I come unto thee to claim that right which through thy gracious promise belongeth unto me. Assure yourself, man, that Jesus Christ requires no portion with his spouse; No, verily; He requires nothing with her but mere poverty; the rich He sends empty away, but the poor are by Him enriched. And indeed, saith Luther, the more miserable, sinful, and distressed, a man doth feel himself, and judge himself to be, the more willing is Christ to receive him and relieve him. So that, saith he, in judging thyself unworthy, thou art thereby become truly worthy; and so indeed thou hast gotten a greater occasion of coming unto Him. Wherefore then, in the words of the apostle, I do exhort and beseech you to come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. *Heb.* iv. 16. *Matth.* ix. 13. *Luke* i. 53. MARR. MOD. DIVIN.

179 Let thy soul be set on the highest mount that any creature was ever yet set upon, and enlarged to take in view the most spacious prospect both of sin and misery, and difficulties of being saved, that ever yet any poor humble soul did ever cast within itself, yea, join to these all the hindrances and objections that the heart of man can invent against itself and salvation; lift up thy eyes and look to the utmost thou canst see, and Christ by his intercession is able to save thee beyond the horizon and utmost compass.

of thy thoughts, even to the utmost. *Heb.* vii. 25. 1 *John* i. 7. Dr. GOODWIN.

180 Justification through the blood of Christ is ever accompanied with sanctification by his Spirit; therefore, if the Spirit of God be working and burning in thy heart, fear not, thou art washed in the crystal sea which is before the throne: if sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, thou art justified by his blood. 1 *Cor.* i. 30.

Mr. SAM. MATHER.

181 There is no finding out to perfection the breadth and length, the depth and height, of God's grace. The love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, passeth all understanding. His grace, and his gifts by grace, unto believers are ineffable, infinitely free, without any merit in us, or any motive; astonishingly rich, while we were enemies, most defiled and deformed ones, and equally without power to resist damning justice, and without the prudence to ask saving mercy, *Rom.* v. 10. *Ephes.* iii. 18, 19. *Col.* i. 21. Angels, our elders and betters, were not pitied, but irreversibly doomed to destruction. More than angels and all the creation was worth was given to redeem us, even as much more than they were worth as God by essence exceeds the mere creature. Christ is God by eternal essence, and yet God spared not his Son, but gave Him up to redeem rebels; whereat hell envies, and and heaven wonders. A vast tribute of praise

must hence rise due, so due, that, if believers be silent, the stones must needs cry out. Believers, that are no longer mutes, have the dumb devil expelled, and their mouths opened for praise, their tongues touched with a coal from the holy alter, and qualified to lift up the name of their Redeemer. *Luke.* xix. 40. 2 *Pet.* ii. 4, 5. *Rev.* v. 9, 10. Mr. DAN. BURGESS.

182 The grand design of all false religions is to patch up a self-righteousness for the justification of a sinner before God. The christian religion teacheth us to seek justification before God by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us upon our believing on Him; which righteousness purchaseth for us not only pardon of sin, but also grace and glory, *Gal.* ii. 21. v. 4. *Rom.* ix. 31, 32. The true and proper imputation of Christ's righteousness is the act of God as a Judge, accepting the righteousness of Christ for a believer, as such a righteousness as that law which the rule of judgment requires, for the justification of a sinner. The denial of a believer's justification by such an imputation of Christ's righteousness to him stabs the very heart of christianity, and destroys all true revealed religion *Rom.* iv. 24. *Gal.* i. 6, 7, 8. Mr. GLASCOCK.

183 God hath called us by his grace to his kingdom of glory: if we do not go by the door of grace, we shall not find the door of the kingdom of glory. Believers have not one thought

of glory but what grace suggests to them, it never entered into their minds to conceive such a thing. Free grace openeth the door, and they see such things as eye never saw, and hear such things as ear never heard, nor did enter into the heart of man. *Rom.* ix. 15, 16. Mr. Tho. Cole.

184 God was a God to Adam before he fell; but to be a God to sinners, this is grace. He was a God to Adam in innocency by virtue of the covenant of works; but he is not a God to any sinner but in a way of free grace. Now that was the covenant, I will be a God to thee and thy seed, *Gen.* xvii. 7. Abraham was a sinner and a child of wrath by nature, as well as others; yet God was his God truly. For God to be a God to them that never sinned, there may be merit; but for God to be a God to those that have sinned, this is grace indeed! Angels are saved by works, sinners cannot be saved but by grace. That ever the Lord should condescend to engage in such a relation, as to give a sinner interest in Him and propriety in Him as his God, this is grace. They that do not think this is grace, they need not argument, but pity and prayer. *Eph.* i. 6. ii. 5, 8.

185 The first part of the covenant is this, that God would be a God to him and his seed; and this indeed is most comprehensive, and includes all the rest: I will establish my covenant and be a God to thee and

thy children after thee. And what is it for God to be a God to a man, thy God, or a God to thee? It is when He gives to a poor creature a special interest and propriety in Himself; so that God, in his all-sufficiency and efficiency, is ours, and we are his. All his attributes and works are ours for our good. I will be thy God, that is, all my attributes shall be thine, for thy good, as really as they are mine for my glory. The infinite wisdom of God shall contrive their good whose God He is; the infinite power of God shall effect it: the infinite love of God is theirs; his mercy, truth, and all his attributes, are theirs; as his essential power, so his working, or his actual power: as He will be all to them, so he will work all for them. *Ps.* lxxxvii. 7. lxxxix. 28, 29. ciii. 17. *Isa.* xxxiii. 22. xlix. 16.

Mr. Sam. Mather.

186 The Lord will be a sun and a shield, *Ps.* lxxxiv. 11. He will be a shield to keep off all evil, and a sun to fill them with all comfort. I am (saith He) thy exceeding great reward. As if He should say, Abraham, Whatsoever is in me, all that I have, all my attributes, are thine, for thy use; my power, my wisdom, my counsel, my goodness, my riches, whatsoever is mine in the whole world, I will give it for thy portion: I and all that I have are thine. And might not He well say, He was an exceeding great reward? Who can understand the

height and depth, and breadth and length, of this reward ! that is, Thou shalt have all kind of comfort in me, and thou shalt have them in the greatest measure. 1 *Sam.* xii. 22. 2 *Sam.* vii. 24. *Isa.* xli. 10. lxii. 5.

187 Let no man look for sanctification before he is justified, that is, let no man be discouraged from coming to Christ, because he finds not in himself that godly sorrow for sin, that ability to repent, that disposition of heart, which he desires to have. We must first be in Christ before we are new creatures. And this is a common fault among us ; we would fain have something before we come : we think God's pardons are not free, but we must bring something in our hand. You know the proclamation runs thus : Buy without money, that is, come without any excellency at all ; because we are commanded to come and take the water of life freely. Therefore I do not say, I have a sinful disposition and an hard heart, and cannot mourn for sin as I should ; therefore I will stay till that be done. It is all one as if thou should say, I must go to the physician ; but I will have my wounds well, and my disease healed first, and when that is done, I will go to the physician. What is the end of thy going to him, but to have thy disease healed ? I say, It is the same folly. The end of going to Christ is, that this very hardness of thy heart may be taken away, that this very deadness of thy spirit may be

removed; that thou mayst be enlivened, quickened, healed, that thou mayst hate sin: for he is thy physician: look not for it beforehand: thou must first be in Christ before thou canst be a new creature. *John* vii. 37. *Matth.* xi. 28. *Isa.* lv. 1.

Dr. PRESTON.

188 Sinners can do nothing but make wounds that Christ may heal them, and make debts that He may pay them, and make falls that He may raise them, and make deaths that He may quicken them, and spin out and dig hells for themselves that He may ransom them. Now will I bless the Lord that ever there was such a thing as the free-grace of God, and a free ransom given for sold souls: only, alas! guiltiness maketh me ashamed to apply Christ, and to think it pride in me to put out my unclean and withered hand to such a Saviour! But it is neither shame nor pride for a drowning man to swim to a rock, nor for a ship-broken soul to run himself ashore upon Christ. *Rom.* vii. 14 to 23. *Rev.* xxii. 17.

Mr. RUTHERFOORD.

189 Consider what a comprehensive blessing salvation is, and take an estimate thereof by comparing it with the temporal deliverances of the Israelites. Those proceeded from a common, ordinary love; these from a peculiar, distinguishing affection: their deliverances were effected not without hazard of their persons; our salvation is effected

only by the blood of Christ: the issue of theirs was not much more than civil tranquility, sitting under their vines and fig-trees; the issue of ours is grace, glory, joy, and those things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man to conceive. *Isa.* lxiv. 4.

Mr. CLARKSON.

190 For God to be a God to any one includes eternal life: for when God becomes a God to a sinner, then He becomes that to him which He is to Himself. And what is God to Himself? Without doubt the fountain of eternal and consummate blessedness. God, when he gives himself in grace to a man, gives him all things; for He is all things. That man finds in God a shield against every evil, and an exceeding great reward. And what can he desire more to perfect happiness? From whence it is that the apostle joins these two, for God to be a God to any one, and to prepare for him a city. *Heb.* xi. 16. Mr. HERM. WITSIUS.

191 God saith to the soul, I am thy salvation; and the soul saith again, Thou art my God. Faith is nothing else but a spiritual echo, returning that voice back again which God first speaks to the soul. For what acquaintance could the soul claim with so glorious a Majesty, if He should not first condescend so low as to speak peace, and whisper secretly to the soul, that He is our loving God and Father, and we his peculiar

ones in Christ; that our sins are all pardoned, his justice fully satisfied, and our persons freely accepted in his dear Son? *Gen.* xv. 1. *Jer.* iii. 19. *Isa.* lxiii. 16. *Lam.* iii. 24. Dr. SIBS.

192 Love, by nature, when it seeth, cannot but cast out its spirit and strength upon amiable objects, and things love-worthy. And what fairer things than Christ! O fair sun, and fair moon, and fair stars, and fair flowers, and fair roses, and fair lilies, and fair creatures! but O ten thousand thousand times fairer Lord Jesus! Alas! I wronged Him in making comparison this way. O black sun and moon, but O fair Lord Jesus! O black flowers, and black lilies, and black roses; but O fair, fair, forever fair, Lord Jesus! O all fair things, black, deformed, and without beauty, when ye are set beside the fairest Lord Jesus! O black heavens, but O fair Christ! O black angels, but O surpassingly fair Lord Jesus! *Song* v. 10 to 16. *Ps.* xlv. 2.

Mr. RUTHERFOORD.

193 That Love is not sincere which proceedeth not from, which is not a fruit of faith: those who do not first really believe on Christ can never sincerely love Him: it is faith alone that worketh by love towards Christ and all his saints. If therefore any do not believe with that faith which unites them to Christ, which within purifies the heart, and is outwardly effectual in duties

of obedience, whatever they may persuade themselves concerning love unto Christ, it is but a vain delusion. Where the faith of men is dead, their love will not be living and sincere. *John* xiv. 15. 1 *Pet.* i. 8. OWEN.

194 Shall we tell men, that unless they be holy they must not believe on Jesus Christ, that they must not venture on Christ for salvation till they be qualified, and fit to be received and welcomed by Him? This were to forbear preaching the gospel at all, or to forbid all men to believe on Christ. For never was any man qualified for Christ. He is well qualified for us, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. But a sinner out of Christ hath no qualifications for Christ, but sin and misery. Whence should he have any better but from and in Christ? Nay, suppose an impossibility, that a man were qualified for Christ, I boldly assert that such a man would not, nor ever could, believe on Christ. For faith is a lost, helpless, condemned sinner's casting himself on Christ for salvation; and the qualified man is no such person, *Matth.* ix. 13. 1 *Tim.* i. 15. Shall we warn people that they should not believe on Christ too soon? It is impossible they should do it too soon. Can a man obey the great gospel command too soon? 1 *John* iii. 23. Or do the great work of God too soon? *John* vi. 29. A man may too soon think he is in Christ, and that is, when he is not so indeed. And this we frequently teach. But that is,

only an idle dream, not faith. A man may too soon fancy that he hath faith; but, I hope, he cannot act faith too soon. If any should say a man may be holy too soon, how would that saying be reflected on? And yet it is certain, that, though no man can be holy too soon (because he cannot too soon believe on Christ, which is the only spring of true holiness) yet he may, and many do, set about the study of that he counts holiness too soon, that is, before the tree be changed, *Matthew* xii. 33, 34. before he have the new heart, *Ezekiel* xxxvi. 26, 27. and the spirit of God dwelling in him, which is only got by faith in Christ, *Gal.* iii. 14. And therefore all this man's studying of holiness is not only vain labor, but acting of sin. And if this study and these endeavors be managed, as commonly they are, to obtain justification before God, they are the more wicked works still. *Rom.* xiv. 23. *Gal.* v. 4.

Mr. TRAIL.

195 The gospel's glory is, that it is the ministration of the Spirit. The great privilege of believers is, that the Lord manifests Himself to them as He doth not to the world: When He manifests his authority in the command, it is then powerful; when He manifests his goodness and truth in the promise, it is full of sweetness; when He manifests his wrath in the threatening, it awes the soul; when he manifests his glory in the face of

Christ, it is ravishing, reforming, attracting. *John* i. 14. xiv. 21, 23. xvii. 6.

Mr. HALYBURTON.

196 Love works by admiration. That is the voice of love, *Zech.* ix. 17. How great is his beauty! How great is his goodness! The soul, being as it were ravished with that view which it hath of the glorious excellencies of God in Christ, hath no way to express its affections but by admiration. How great is his goodness! How great is his beauty! And this beauty of God is that sweetness and holy symmetry of glory in all the perfections of God, being all in a sweet correspondency exalted in Christ, who is the proper object of our love. To see infinite holiness, purity, and righteousness, with infinite love, goodness, grace, and mercy, all equally glorified in and towards the same things and persons, one glimpse whereof is not to be attained in the world out of Christ, is that beauty of God which attracts the love of a believing soul, and fills it with an holy admiration of Him. *Ps.* lxxxv. 10. *Luke* i. 46, 68, 78. *John* i. 14.

197 The revelation made of Christ in the blessed gospel is far more glorious, more excellent, and more filled with rays of divine wisdom and goodness, than the whole creation, and the just comprehension of it attainable, can contain or afford. Without the knowledge hereof, the mind of man, however priding itself in other inventions

and discoveries, is wrapped up in darkness and confusion. *John* xvii. 3.

198 The humbling our souls before the Lord Christ from an apprehension of his divine excellencies, the ascription of glory, honor, and praise, with thanksgiving, unto Him on the great motive of the work of redemption, with the blessed effects thereof, are things wherein the life of faith is continually exercised: nor can we have any evidence of an interest in that blessedness which consists in the eternal assignation of all glory and praise unto Him in heaven, if we are not exercised unto this worship of Him here on earth, *Isa.* vi. 3. *Rev.* v. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. They who desire not to behold the glory of Christ in this world, shall never behold Him in glory hereafter unto their satisfaction; nor do they desire so to do: only they suppose it a part of that relief which they would have when they are gone out of this world. For what should beget such a desire in them? Nothing can do it but some view of it here by faith, which they despise or totally neglect. Every pretence of a desire of heaven, and of the presence of Christ therein, that doth not arise from, that is not resolved into, that prospect which we have of the glory of Christ in this world by faith, is mere fancy and imagination. 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. iv. 18.

Dr. Owen.

199 Whatever men may pretend, no

man can be truly and rightly studious of the advancement of the kingdom of God in the world, that hath not first felt the mighty power and blessed effects of it in his own soul. 2 *Tim.* i. 12. Mr. SHAW.

200 To suppose that the Lord Jesus Christ, as the king and head of the church, hath not an infinite divine power, whereby He is able always to relieve, succour, save and deliver it, if it were to be done by the alteration of the whole or any part of God's creation, so as that the fire should not burn nor the water overwhelm them, nor men be able to retain their thoughts or ability one moment to afflict them; that their distresses are not always the effects of his wisdom, and never from the defect of his power; is utterly to overthrow all faith, hope, and the whole of religion itself, *Gen.* xxxi. 29. xxxiii. 1, 4. *Dan.* iii. 27. There are no true believers who will part with their faith herein for the whole world: namely, that the Lord Jesus Christ is able, by his divine power and presence, immediately to aid, assist, relieve, and deliver them in every moment of their surprizals, fears, and dangers, in every trial or duty they may be called unto, in every difficulty they have to conflict withal. And to expect these things any otherwise than by virtue of his divine nature, is wofully to deceive our own souls. For this is the work of God. *Heb.* vii. 25. *Rev.* i. 18. ii. 26, 27.

Dr. OWEN.

201 I am sure my Well-beloved is God. And when I say Christ is God, and my Christ is God, I have said all things, I can say no more. I would I could build as much on this, My Christ is God, as it would bear, I might lay all the world upon it. *John* x. 28. *John* i. 49. *Col.* i. 16, 17.

Mr. RUTHERFOORD.

202 They who reject the divine person of Christ, who believe it not, who discern not the wisdon, grace, love, and power of God therein, do constantly reject or corrupt all other spiritual truths of divine revelation. Nor can it otherwise be: for they have a consistency only in their relation unto the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, and from thence derive their sense and meaning. This being removed, the truth in all other articles of religion immediately falls to the ground. 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. 1 *John* iv. 2, 3. *Eph.* ii. 20, 21. *Col.* ii. 7. *Rev.* i. 18.

203 By Him were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, *Col.* i. 16, 17. And because of the great notions and apprehensions that were then in the world, especially among the Jews (unto whom the apostle had respect in this epistle) of the greatness and glory of the invisible part of the creation in heaven above, he mentions them in particular under the most glorious titles that any other could or then did ascribe unto them: whether they

be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers ; all things were created by Him and for him : the same expression that is used of God absolutely, *Rom.* xi. 36. *Rev.* iv. 11. *John* i. 1, 2, 3. *Heb.* i. 1, 2, 3. And those that are not under the efficacy of spiritual infatuation, cannot but admire at the power of unbelief, the blindness of the minds of men, and the craft of Satan in them who deny the divine nature of Jesus Christ. 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. Dr. Owen.

204 Let it please the Lord to take me out of this life this hour, or whensoever he pleaseth, I leave this behind me, that I do and will acknowledge Jesus Christ for my Lord and my God. I have not this out of the scripture only, but also by great and manifold experience ; for the name of Jesus hath oftentimes helped me, when no creature could help or comfort me, *Pr.* xviii. 10. *Song* i. 3. He that hath Christ for his king and God, let him be assured he hath the devil for his enemy, who will work him much sorrow, and will plague him all the days of his life. But let this be our comfort and great glory, that we poor people have the Lord of life and of death, and of all creatures, clothed with our flesh and blood, sitting at the right hand of God his Father, who ever liveth and maketh intercession for us, defendeth and protecteth us. *Acts* iii. 15. *Heb.* ix. 24. Dr. Luther.

205 Let the world rage while it pleaseth,

let it set itself with all its power and craft against every thing of Christ that is in it, which, whatever is pretended, proceeds from an hatred to his person; let men make themselves drunk with the blood of his saints: we have this to oppose unto all their attempts, unto our supportment, namely, what He says of Himself: Fear not, I am the first and the last, He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death, *Rev.* i. 16. 18.

206 It is the person of Christ which is the first and principal object of that faith wherewith we are required to believe in Him; and so to do is not only to assent unto the truth of the doctrine revealed by Him, but also to place our trust and confidence in Him for mercy, relief, and protection, for righteousness, life, and salvation, for a blessed resurrection and eternal reward, *John* xiv. 1. vi. 54. 1 *John* v. 10, 11.

207 To fancy that all the love of Christ unto us consists in the precepts and promises of the gospel, and all our love unto Him in the observance of his commands, without a real love in Him unto our persons, like that of an husband to his wife, and an holy affection in our hearts and minds unto his person, is to overthrow the whole power of religion, to despoil it of its life and soul, leaving nothing but the carcass of it. *Gal.* ii. 20. *John* xvii. 21. *Eph.* v. 25, 26, 27. 1 *Cor.* xvi. 22.

208 Blessed Jesus! we can add nothing to thee, nothing to thy glory; but it is a joy of heart unto us that thou art what thou art, that thou art so gloriously exalted at the right hand of God; and we do long more fully and clearly to behold that glory, according to thy prayer and promise, *John* xvii. 24.

209 Then do we find food for our souls in the word of truth, then do we taste how gracious the Lord is therein; then is the scripture full of refreshment to us, as a spring of living water, when we are taken into a blessed view of the glory of Christ therein. This is the glory of the scripture, that it is the great, the only outward means of representing unto us the glory of Christ: and He is the Sun in the firmament thereof, which only hath light in itself, and communicates it to all other things besides. *John* i. 9. v. 39. *Col.* i. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Dr. Owen.

210 God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their sins unto them, 2 *Cor.* v. 19. *q. d.* Because, as God stands in relation to man according to the tenor of the covenant of works, and so out of Christ, he could not, without prejudice to his justice, be reconciled unto them, nor have any thing to do with them otherwise than in wrath and indignation; therefore, to the intent that justice and mercy might meet together, and righteousness and peace might embrace each other,

and so God stand in relation to man according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, He put Himself into his Son Jesus Christ, and shrouded Himself there, so that He might speak peace to his people. Sweetly saith Luther, Because the nature of God was otherwise higher than we are able to attain unto, therefore hath he humbled Himself unto us and taken our nature upon Him, and so put Himself into Christ: here He looketh for us, here He will receive us; and he that seeketh Him here shall find Him. This, saith God the Father, is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, *Matth.* iii. 17. We must not think that this voice came from heaven for Christ's own sake, but for our sakes, even as Christ himself saith, *John* xii. 30. The truth is, Christ had no need that it should be said unto Him, This is my well beloved Son; He knew that from all eternity, and that He should still so remain, though these words had not been spoken from heaven: therefore by these words God the Father, in Christ his Son, cheereth the hearts of poor sinners, and greatly delighteth them with singular comfort and heavenly sweetness, assuring them, that whosoever is married unto Christ, and so in Him by faith, he is as acceptable to God the Father as Christ himself, *Eph.* i. 6. He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Wherefore, if you would be acceptable to God, and be his

dear child, then by faith cleave unto his beloved Son Christ, and hang about his neck, yea, and creep into his bosom; and so shall the love and favor of God be as deeply insinuated into you as into Christ himself; and so shall God the Father, together with his beloved Son, wholly possess you and be possessed of you; and so God and Christ and you shall become entirely one, according to Christ's prayer, *John* xvii. 22. that they may be one in us, as Thou and I are One. MARR. MOD. DIVIN.

211 None of the Israelites under the Old Testament were ever saved by the old Sinia covenant; neither did any of them ever attain to holiness by the terms of it. Some of them did indeed perform the commandments of it sincerely, though imperfectly; but those were justified first, and made partakers of life and holiness by virtue of that better covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which was the same in substance with the new covenant or testament, established by the blood of Christ. Had it not been for the better covenant, the Sinia covenant would have proved to them an occasion of no happiness, but only of sin and despair and destruction. Of itself it was only a killing letter, the ministration of death and condemnation; and therefore it is now abolished, 2 *Cor.* iii. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11. We have cause to praise God for delivering his church by the blood of Christ from this yoke

of bondage; and we have cause to abhor the device of those that would lay upon us a more grievous and terrible yoke, by turning our very new covenant into a covenant of sincere works, and leaving us no such better covenant as the Israelites had under their yoke to relieve us in our extremity. *Gal.* i. 8. ii. 16. Mr. MARSHAL.

212 He that can search in any measure, by a spiritual light, into his own heart and soul, will find, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' a better plea than any he can be furnished withal from any worth of his own. *Dan.* ix. 18.

213 Many there are who have in notion received the doctrine of free justification by the blood of Christ, whom, while they are secure in their ways, without trouble or distress, it is impossible to persuade that they do not live and act upon that principle, and walk before God in the strength of it. Let any great conviction from the word, or by any imminent and pressing danger, befall these men, then their hearts are laid open; then all their hope is in their repentance, amendment of life, performance of duties in a better manner; and the iniquity of their self-righteousness is discovered. *Jonah* ii. 5, 6, &c. 1 *Kings* xxi. 27.

214 God, I thank thee, I am not as other men, *&c.* is apt to creep into the heart in a strict course of duties. And this self-pleasing is the very root of self-righteousness,

which as it may defile the saints themselves, so it will destroy those who only in the strength of their convictions go forth after an holiness and righteousness: for it quickly produceth the deadly poisonous effect of spiritual pride, which is the greatest assimilation to the nature of the devil that the nature of man is capable of. *Isa.* lxv. 5. *Luke* xviii. 11. 2 *Cor.* xi. 13. xii. 5, 9.

215 Love enlarges the heart to Christ, and every thing of Christ; valuation, delight, satisfaction, accompany it; it makes the heart free, noble, ready for service, compassionate, zealous. To think of glorifying God without hearts warmed, enlarged, made tender, compassionate by gospel love, is to think to fly without wings, or to walk without feet. What day, almost what business, wherein our love is not put to the trial in all the properties of it; whether it can bear and forbear, whether it can pity and relieve, whether it can hope all things, believe all things; whether it can exercise itself towards friends and towards enemies, whether it can give allowance for men's weakness and temptations; whether it can value Christ above all, and rejoice in Him in the loss of all; and many the like things it is continually tried withal, *Hab.* iii. 17, 18. Now nothing so contracts and withers the heart, as to all these things, as the cares of this world do. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 13. *Col.* iii. 1, 2, 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* vi. 9, 10. 1 *Pet.* ii. 5, 6, 7, 8.

216 Those graces of holiness have the most evident and legible characters of electing love upon them which are most effectual in working us unto a conformity to Christ. That grace is certainly from an eternal spring which makes us like unto Jesus Christ. Of this sort are meekness, humility, patience, self-denial, contempt of the world, readiness to pass by wrongs, to forgive enemies, to love and to do good unto all. *Phil.* ii. 4, 5, 6, &c. Dr. Owen.

217 No where doth the incredible love of God towards miserable mortals more evidently display itself than in Jesus Christ, which is suited to melt the heart frozen even into ice, and to kindle into ardent flames of mutual love; for the love of Christ constraineth us, 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. who, swallowed up in the meditation thereof, doth not cry out, 'Art Thou, O most loving Jesus, scorched no less with love to me than with the flames of divine wrath against my sins, and shall I grow lukewarm in my love to thee again? Hast Thou died for my salvation, and shall not I live to thy glory? Didst Thou for my sake descend into hell, and shall I not at thy command cheerfully tread the way to heaven? Didst Thou deliver thyself to be tormented with the pains of hell, and shall not I give up myself to Thee, to bear the yoke which is light, and thy burden which is sweet?' It is inexpressible how the pious soul, intent on such meditations, is

displeased with its own lukewarmness ; desiring and wishing for itself, that a mind an hundred times more capacious might be given, that it might be wholly filled with the love of Christ.. *Ps.* cxix. 32.

Mr. Herm. Witsius.

218 He that hath the strongest faith, he that believes in the greatest degree the promise of pardon and the remission of sins, I dare boldly say he hath the holiest heart and the holiest life.. *Col.* i. 10. *Jam.* ii. 18.. *Eph.* ii. 10. Dr. Preston.

219 Holiness in this life is absolutely necessary to salvation, not only as a means to the end, but, by a nobler kind of necessity, as part of the end itself. Though we are not saved by good works as procuring causes, yet we are saved to good works, as fruits and effects of saving grace, which God hath prepared that we should walk in them, *Eph.* ii. 10. It is indeed one part of our salvation to be delivered from the bondage of the covenant of works ; but the end of this is, not that we may have liberty to sin, (which is the worst of slavery) but that we may fulfil the royal law of liberty, and that we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, *Gal.* iii. 13. Yea, holiness in this life is such a part of our salvation as is a necessary means to make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in heavenly light and glory. Without holiness we can never see God, and are as unfit

for the Glorious Presence as swine for the presence-chamber of an earthly prince. *Heb.* xii. 14.

220 Those that with due affection believe steadfastly on Christ for the free gift of all his salvation may find by experience, that they are carried forth by that faith, according to the measure of its strength or weakness, to love God heartily, because He hath loved them first, to praise Him and to pray unto Him in the name of Christ. MARSHAL.

221 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, *Matth.* v. 8. and without holiness no man shall see God, *Heb.* xii. 14. No gifts, no duties, no natural endowments, will evidence a right in heaven; but the least measure of true holiness will secure heaven to the soul. As holiness is the soul's best evidence for heaven, so it is a continued spring of comfort to it in the way thither. The purest and the sweetest pleasures in this world are the results of holiness. Till we come to live holily, we never live comfortably. Heaven is epitomized in holiness. And, to say no more, it is the peculiar mark by which God hath visibly distinguished his own from other men, *Ps.* iv. 3. the Lord hath set a part him that is godly for Himself. As if He had said, This is the man, and that the woman, to whom I intend to be good for ever: this is a man for me. O holiness, how surpassingly glorious art thou! *Ps.* l. 2. lxiv. 10. xcvii. 11. 12. Mr. FLAVEL.

222 It is matter of wonder men should admit the report and attestation of others concerning the truth and reality of godliness, who yet live strangers to it themselves, yea, should be at some toil and pains, and come at length to be almost Christians, without pursuing this in greater earnest. *Matth.* xiii. 20, 21. *Jude* 4, 10, 16. Mr. FLEMING.

223 It is often and truly spoken unto, how men may have their minds enlightened, their affections wrought upon, and their lives much changed, and yet come short of true holiness. The best trial of this work is by its universality with respect unto its subject. If any thing remain unsanctified in us, sin may there set up its throne and maintain its sovereignty; but where this work is true and real, however weak and imperfect it may be as unto its degrees, yet it possesseth the whole person, and leaveth not the least hold unto sin, wherein it doth not continually combat and conflict with it. There is saving light in the mind, and life in the will, and love in the affections, and grace in the conscience, suited to its nature; there is nothing in us whereunto the power of holiness doth not reach according to its measure. *Thes.* v. 23. *Eph.* iv. 13. *Ps.* cxix. 6.

224 If we design to be holy, let us constantly in our families, towards our relations, in churches, in our conversations in the world, and dealings with men, all men, towards our enemies and persecutors, the

worst of them, towards all mankind as we have opportunity, labour after a conformity unto God, and to express our likeness unto Him in this philanthropy, goodness, benignity, condescension, readiness to forgive, help, and relieve ; without which we neither are nor can be the children of our Father which is in heaven. *Matth.* v. 44, 45. *Luke* x. 33, 37. 1 *Pet.* i. 15, 16.

Dr. Owen.

225 They are said to keep his testimonies who seek Him with the whole heart. Set the best saint's hands at work, and they shall fall short in many degrees ; but set the heart on work, and it inwardly intends all : it has a will for all. It is impossible by any outward act to do this : with my mind I serve the law of God ; but, when I come to put this in act, my good works are infinitely short of what my sincerity aims at ; I can never be so holy outwardly as inwardly I would be. This is the nature of sincerity, that it falls in with all the will of God, begs that every tittle of the will of God may be written in the soul and expressed in the life. *Ps.* cxix. 10. *Rom.* vii. 22, 25.

Mr. Tho. Cole.

226 Is it not strange, what a multitude in these times profess the truth and yet hate it, and were never drawn with the cords of love ! How very many have courted the name of christian, and have wooed the shadow of religion, who never knew the truth

thereof; which certainly is a convincing evidence of the gospel's conquest, that so many knees should bow to the name of Jesus whose hearts were never bowed or really subdued to Him. 2 *Tim.* iii. 5.

Mr. FLEMING.

227 There never was by any, nor ever can be, any act or duty of true holiness performed, where there was not, in order of nature antecedently, an habit of holiness in the persons by whom they are performed. Many acts and duties, for the substance of them good and approveable, may be performed without it; but no one that hath the proper form and nature of holiness can be so. And the reason is, because every act of true holiness must have something supernatural in it, from an internal, renewed principle of grace: and that which hath not so, be it otherwise what it will, is no act or duty of true holiness. This is fully expressed, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26, 27. "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." The whole of all that actual obedience, and all those duties of holiness which God requireth of us, is contained in these expressions; "Ye shall walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments and do them." Antecedent hereunto, and as the principle and cause thereof, God gives a new heart and a new spirit. [illegible] new heart is a heart with the law

of God written in it; and this new spirit is the habitual inclination of that heart unto the life of God, or all duties of obedience. *Jer.* xxxi. 31, 32, 33, 34.

228 Humility in all things is a necessary consequent of a due consideration of God's decree of election. For what were we when He set his heart upon us to choose us and do us good for ever? Poor, lost, undone creatures, that lay perishing under the guilt of our apostacy from Him. What did He see in us to move him so to choose us? Nothing but sin and misery. What did he foresee that we would do of ourselves more than others, if He wrought not in us by his effectual grace? Nothing but a continuance in sin and rebellion against Him, and that forever. How should the thoughts hereof keep our souls in all humility and continual self-abasement! For what have we in or from ourselves on the account whereof we should be lifted up? Wherefore, as the elect of God, let us put on humility in all things. And there is no grace whereby at this day we may more glorify God and the gospel, now the world is sinking into ruin under the weight of its own pride. The spirits of men, the looks of men, the tongues of men, the lives of men, are lifted up by their pride unto their destruction. The Good Lord keep professors from a share in the pride of these days! Spiritual pride in foolish self-exalting opinions, and the pride of life in

the fashions of the world, are the poison of this age. *Deut.* ix. 4, 5. *Prov.* xvi. 19. *Ezek.* xvi. 6, 7, 8. *Col.* iii. 12.

Dr. OWEN.

229 An attentive consideration of the Lord Jesus is a most powerful means of sanctification. No where doth it more clearly appear what a vile, filthy thing sin is, than in the lowness, emptyings, and sufferings of Christ. What clothed the Lord of glory with the contemptible form of a servant? What pressed the magnanimous Lion of the tribe of Judah with such great horrors and griefs, as that under them He well-nigh fainted? What stirred up the cruel forces of hell against Him? What turned the affluence of divine consolations into most doleful drought? What mingled those most bitter bitternesses in the cup of divine wrath, with which the beloved Son of God was well-nigh exanimated? Certainly sin was the cause of all these, *Isa.* liii. 5. Will not he who thinks of this burn with irreconcileable hatred thereof? Will he not endeavor to take revenge on such an outrageous monster, which so cruelly afflicted his Dearest Lord; and which, unless it had been first slain, would have raged with the same cruelty against all those by whom it is so kindly received? Will any, who seriously considers and believes this, ever bring his mind to give up himself again a slave to that tyrant, from whose chains, glowing with the fire of

hell, he could never have been delivered but by the cursed death of the Son of God? Thus the meditation of the sufferings of Christ maketh us, that, being dead to sin, we should live unto righteousness. 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. Mr. HERM. WIHSIUS.

230 The sufferings and obedience of Christ afford the highest motives to dissuade from sin and press to holiness, and lay a man under an infinite obligation in point of gratitude to live unto God. That very grace, which enables him to believe in Christ, equally inclines him to love God. A formal act of saving faith includes in it a desire of holiness, and purpose of using all proper means to attain it, and by the grace of God to live holily. For it is impossible for a man, acting rationally, to go to Christ and his righteousness for a right to pardon and life without a sincere desire of that life which consists in holiness here as its beginning, and glory in heaven as its consummation. 1 *Pet.* i. 8. 1 *John* i. 6. ii. 3. iii. 23. Mr. GLASCOCK.

231 Hast thou, O Lord, from eternity had thoughts of glorifying me a poor miserable man, who am less than nothing? and shall not I again always carry Thee in my eyes and in my bosom! shall not I be delighted in meditating on Thee! shall not I cry out, How precious are thy thoughts also unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! *Ps.* cxxxix. 17. Shall I not be affected with most sincere repentance of

that time wherein so many hours, days, weeks, months, and years, have passed me, wherein I never had a holy, pleasant thought of Thee! Hast Thou out of mere love chosen me to salvation, and shall not I again choose Thee for my Lord, my King, my Spouse, the Peculiar One of my soul, my chief or rather my only delight! Hast Thou chosen me out of so many others, who being left to themselves, eternal destruction abides them; and shall I not with my utmost power endeavor to shine before others in love, in thy worship, and in all duties of holiness! Hast Thou predestinated me to holiness, so lovely in itself, so necessary for me, as that without it there is no salvation; and shall not I walk therein! Shall I presume so to sophisticate with Thee, O thou brightest Teacher of Truth, that, separating the end from the means, I shall securely promise to myself the end, as being predestinated thereto, in a neglect of the means, to which I am no less predestinated! Is thy purpose concerning my salvation fixed and immoveable; and shall I every hour be changed, now for Thee, now again giving up my service to Satan! Shall not I rather with so firm purpose adhere to Thee, that I should rather suffer a thousand deaths than perfidiously depart from Thee! Shall not I be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that my labor is not in vain in the Lord! 1 *Cor.* xv. 58.

Wilt thou make me assured of thy love, which passeth all understanding; and shall not I again love Thee with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my strength! Wilt Thou assure me of my salvation; and shall not I, having this hope, purify myself even as thou art pure! 1 *John* iii. 3.

Who, understanding these things, will deny that the doctrine of election supplies to the pious soul plenty of matter for such and the like meditations? and who will deny that in the practice of such meditations lies the very kernal of all holiness and godliness. 1 *Thes.* i. 4, 5. 1 *Pet.* i. 15, 16.

Mr. Herm. Witsius.

232 Believers as they were in the primitive times holy in their lives, so they professed this still to be the foundation of their holiness, Christ hath died, Christ is risen, Christ is in heaven; therefore we must live so and so: and this was their great profession. It dasheth all the carnal gospellers in the world. It would shame men out of their sins, or out of their profession of Christ. If Paul were alive, he would spit in any man's face that will say he believeth in Christ, that died and rose again, and yet lived in sin. *Rom.* vi. 1, 2. 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15.

Dr. Goodwin.

233 The especial procuring cause of this holiness is the mediation of Christ. We are not in this matter concerned in any thing, let men call it what they please, virtue, holiness,

or godliness, that hath not a special relation unto the Lord Christ and his mediation. Evangelical holiness is purchased for us by Him according to the tenor of the everlasting covenant, is promised unto us on his account, actually impetrated for us by his intercession, and communicated to us by his Spirit. And hereby we do not only cast off all the moral virtues of the heathens from having the least concernment herein, but all the principles and duties of persons professing Christianity, who are not actually and really implanted into Christ. For he it is who of God is made unto us sanctification. 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *John* xv. 5. *Luke* xxii. 32.

234 The life of God in us consists in conformity to Christ; nor is the holy Spirit, as the principal and efficient cause of it, given to us for any other end but to unite us to him and make us like him! Wherefore the original gospel duty, which animates and rectifies all others, is a design for conformity to Christ in all the gracious principles and qualifications of his holy soul, wherein the image of God in Him doth consist. His meekness, lowliness of mind, condescension unto all sorts of persons, his love and kindness to mankind, his readiness to do good to all, with patience and forbearance, are continually set before us in his example. With respect unto them it is required, that the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus, and that we walk in love, as he also

loved us. *Eph.* v. 2. *Phil.* ii. 5. *Rom.* viii. 29.

235 Nothing less than the entire renovation of the image of God in our souls will constitute us evangelically holy. No series of obediential actings, no observance of religious duties, no attendance unto actions among men as morally virtuous and useful, how exact soever they may be, or how constant soever we may be unto them, will ever render us lovely or holy in the sight of God, unless they all proceed from the renovation of the image of God in us, or that habitual principle of spiritual life and power which render us conformable unto him. *Rom.* xii. 2. *Col.* iii. 10. Dr. Owen.

236 Morality is not grace; because it doth not change nature: if it did, many of the heathen were as near to God as the best of Christians. Whatever may be done by the strength of nature cannot alter it; for no nature can change itself. Poison may be great within the skin, like a viper's. Be we never so speckled with a reformation, freedom from gross sins argues not a friendship for God. None were ever so great enemies to Christ as the Pharisees, to whom Christ gave no better a title than that of the devil's children, and charges them with hatred both of Himself and Father. *John* xv. 24. Mr. Charnock.

237 There is nothing man does more affect in the world than a self-sufficiency,

and an independency on any other power than his own. This temper is as much riveted in his nature as any other false principle whatever: for man does derive it from his first parents, as the prime legacy bequeathed to his nature; for it was the first thing discovered in man at his fall: he would be as God, independent on him. Now God to cross this principle, suffers his elect to lie in the grave till they stink, like Lazarus, that there may be no excuse to ascribe their resurrection to their own power. God lets men run so far in sin, that they do unman themselves, that he may proclaim to all the world that we are unable to do any thing of ourselves towards our recovery, without a superior principle, *Jer.* ii. 31. 2 *Cor.* iii. 5. *Job* xxi. 14. To turn to God in ways of righteousness is contrary to the stream of corrupt nature: and therefore it must be overpowered by a flood of almighty grace, as the stream of the river is by the tide of the sea. Therefore, when you see a man cast away his pleasures, deprive himself of those contentments to which his soul was once knit, and walk in paths contrary to corrupt nature, you may search for the cause any where rather than in nature itself. *Jer.* xiii. 23. *Eph.* i. 19. 1 *Pet.* i. 3.

Mr. Charnock.

238 We believe this day the resurrection of the dead, and an undoubted accomplishment of that truth which to natural reason

would seem a strange contradiction. But should we not consider that the same truth, though in a spiritual way, yet most visibly and upon a higher account, is verified before our eyes; how it is sure, such are quickened and brought to life who were dead in their sins, were past feeling, yea, for many years have lain as in a cold grave, without sense of God or their own case, who in one moment, at the voice of the word, have been made to stir and arise! And is not this something as discernibly above nature, or the influence of second causes, yea, as marvellous an act of divine power as the resurrection of the dead in the last day, which seems to some such a dark and strange thing to believe? *John* v. 25. xi. 25. *Eph.* v. 14.

239 It is the peculiar work of the Spirit to open the eyes and enlighten the soul by an effective illumination, and discover to us the evidence of divine truths; nor can the proposal of the object with the greatest certainty of evidence, or by moral reason, cause men to discern spiritual things spiritually; since their must be a supernatural light, and suiting of the visive faculty to the object. *Luke* xxiv. 45. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. *Jer.* xxiv. 7. Mr. Fleming.

240 God's creating power drew the world out of nothing, but his converting power frames the new creature out of something worse than nothing. What power must that

be which can stop the tide of the sea, and make it suddenly recoil back? What a vast power must that be that can change a black cloud into a glorious sun? This and more doth God do in conversion; he doth not only take smooth pieces of the softest matter, but the ruggedest timber, full of knots, to plain, and shew his strength and art upon. It is not so great a work to raise many thousands killed in battle as to gospelise one dead soul. 2 *Cor.* iv. 6. *Eph.* i. 19. ii. 1, 5.

Mr. CHARNOCK.

241 We are indeed bidden to compel men to come in; but, unless there be another compeller, that is, except there be the Spirit within to do it, the work is not done, unless there be too compellers at the same time, the Holy Ghost preaching within to your hearts when we preach to your ears; except there be two callers, that, when we call men, the Lord sends his Spirit to call you too; it is in vain. For you must know, that it is as hard a thing to move a man to leave his pleasures and divers lusts, and vain conversation, as to turn the whole course of nature. Now, unless there be an almighty power to turn this course of nature, no man will ever come to Christ. A man may as well say, I will make a clod of earth a shining star, as to say he can make the carnal and dead heart of man like the image of God. It must be the Spirit of God Himself that

must do it: it is a work above nature. *Eph.* i. 19. Dr. PRESTON.

242 The most refined and ingenious sort of unregenerate men have nothing in them which is more excellent than common grace; and common grace leaves them in a state of nature, under the power of sin, and in the very suburbs of hell, wholly at the command of Satan. And if any man think otherwise, let him take heed that very thought doth not nail him fast to that unregenerate and cursed state for evermore. 1 *Cor.* i. 19 to 29. Dr. CHENELLES.

243 To a perfect and proper knowledge of supernatural things the revelation of the object is not sufficient, nor a due use of reason in the subject; but moreover there is required the grace of Christ, and the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, whereby the heart may be opened and softened, and a spiritual taste and relish given, suited to the true sweetness of supernatural truths. *Ps.* cxix. 18, 34.

244 Heavenly things exceed the reach of reason, for they are above right reason: they are contrary to the wisdom of the flesh, for they are against depraved nature. Nature stands in need of grace, that the faculties may be rightly disposed to receive supernatural objects, and grace uses nature, that by the clearness of the mind, the perspicuity of the judgment, and the light of good learning, the progress in the study of the

Holy Scriptures may be more successful. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. 2 *Tim.* iii. 14, 15.

Dr. Reynolds.

245 The least spark of saving, regenerating grace is wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost, as given unto men to dwell in them and to abide with them. He is the water given by Jesus Christ unto believers, which is in them a well of water springing up to everlasting life, *John* iv. 14. First they receive the water, the spring itself, that is the Holy Spirit, and from thence living waters do arise up in them; they are wrought, effected, produced by the Spirit which is given to them, *Ezek.* xi. 19. The least of saving grace, such as is peculiar to them that are regenerate, is spirit, *John* iii. 6. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit; whatever it is that is so born, it is spirit: it hath a spiritual being, and it is not educible by any means out of the principles of nature. So, 2 *Cor.* v. 17, it is said to be a new creature. Be it never so little or so great, however it may differ in degrees in one and in another, yet the nature of it is the same in all: it is a new creature. As the least worm of the earth, in the order of the old creation, is as much a creature as the sun, yea, or the most glorious angel in heaven; so, in the order of the new creation, the least spark or dram of true grace, that is from the sanctifying Spirit, is a new creature, no less than the highest faith or love

that ever were in the chiefest of the apostles. Now that which is spirit, and that which is not spirit, that which hath a new spiritual being, and that which hath none, whatever appearance there may be among them, yet they differ specifically from one another: and thus it is with the saving grace that is in a regenerate man, and those common graces which are in others that are not so. *Acts* ii. 33. *Tit.* iii. 5, 6. *Rom.* viii. 5.

Dr. OWEN.

246 Such as have passed the new birth must know a spiritual and new life, with which they were not born, and is from no natural cause, but formed and wrought within by the Spirit, whereof there is as certain and undeniable a demonstration as they are sure they breathe and have a natural life: a life that hath its peculiar operations and vital acts, put forth in its breathings, delights, and desires, in a near converse with the Lord, as truly as any acts of this natural life; with those sensible languishings and overcloudings thereof, as well as enjoyments and pleasures proper to its own nature, as the influences and breathings of the Spirit of the Lord are let forth or restrained. It is sure, nothing can be more expressly shewed than this from the whole Scripture, and how it follows on an union with Jesus Christ, in whom it is hid. *Jer.* xxxi. 33. *John* iii. 5. *Gal.* ii. 20. *John* vi. 56, 57.

Mr. FLEMING.

247 All zealous, devout people in a natural religion are enemies to the gospel. By natural religion I mean that which is the product of the remnant of God's image in fallen man, a little improved by the light of God's word. All such cannot endure to hear that God's law must be perfectly fulfilled in every tittle of it, or no man can be saved by doing: that they must all perish for ever who have not the righteousness of a man who never sinned, who is also God over all, blessed forever, to shelter and cover them from a holy God's anger, and to render them accepted of him: that this righteousness is put on by the grace of God, and a man must betake himself to it, and receive it as a naked, blushing sinner: that no man can do any thing that is good till gospel-grace renew him, and make him first a good man. This they never will receive; but do still think a man may grow good by doing good. *Matth.* xix. 16. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. *John* v. 40. Mr. TRAIL.

248 If a man who had been scorched in hell should again enjoy his wonted pleasures, and have all the while a fresh remembrance of his late torments, were not his will changed by powerful grace, he would stand it out as stiffly against God as ever, nothwithstanding those terrible marks of wrath, and be without a holy fear of that justice which he had felt. *Prov.* xxvii. 22. *Rev.* xvi. 9, 11. Mr. CHARNOCK.

249 What is the reason carnal men leave Christ for the pleasures of this world? Because the pleasures of the world are real things to them. Therefore, unless God make the things of another world real too, a man will never leave realities for notions. All that reason or notions can represent of Christ will never take a man's heart off from the real things he sees here below; and therefore God comes and weighs down the reality of the things of this world by the reality of the things of the other world. *Pro.* iii. 17. viii. 19, 35. *Jer.* xxiii. 28.

Dr. GOODWIN.

250 You may as soon wash a blackmoor white, as cleanse a defiled conscience by duties, ordinances, and moral endeavors, without Christ: yea, they will but make thee worse: for the Lord will not bless them, when carnally trusted to and rested in without Christ. *Jer.* ii. 22. xiii. 23. *John* xv. 5. Mr. S. MATHER.

251 To say that we have a sufficiency in ourselves so much as to think a good thought, to do any thing as we ought, any power, any ability that is our own, or in us by nature, however externally excited and guided by motives, directions, reasons, encouragements of what sort soever, to believe or obey the gospel savingly in any one instance, is to overthrow the gospel, and the faith of the catholic church in all ages. 2 *Cor.* iii. 5. *Ps.* lxxxvii. 7. Dr. OWEN.

252 As for me, I find more solid truth in that one scripture, which tells us that "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," *Jer.* xvii. 9, than in many volumes of idle antiscriptural notions, reared up on the subtile arguings of men, whose eyes have never been opened to see the plague of their own hearts, and who therefore run out in asserting such an ability and power, and inclination to good in man, as neither scripture, nor the experience of such as have their eyes in the least measure opened, admit of. However, if others will think that there are in them such good inclinations, I will quit my part in them. Woful experience convinces me and obliges me to acknowledge to my own shame, that I never looked towards the Lord's way, save when He drew me. "I was as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." I never went longer in it than the force lasted; I inclined to sit down, and sat indeed down at every step; no great sign I had any heart to the way! I never got up again, but when the Lord's power was of new put forth. I all this while never went one step but with a grudge; I frequently looked back to Sodom; I have been as a backsliding heifer; I was grieved for what I left behind; my heart clove to what my light had the greatest opposition to. Thus I was of them that rebel against light. I often refused where the command was plainest. When I was brought

into a strait, I betook myself rather to any shift than to Christ. Sin bit me, and yet I loved it: my heart deceived me often, and yet I trusted in it rather than in God. God dealt with me in a way of kindness; but when he spake to me in my prosperity, I would not hear: he smote me, and I went on frowardly: I never parted with any sin till God beat me and drove me from it, and hedged in my way. Surely this looks like the heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. *Gen.* vi. 5. *Rom.* iii. 10, 11, 12. *Prov.* xxviii. 26. *John* v. 40.

Mr. HALYBURTON.

253 For any to say that a will to believe is not purchased by Christ, and affectually applied by him, but depends on something to be done by men, is a great derogation to the merit of his sufferings. It is, in effect, to steal a jewel from our Sovereign's crown, and to wreath it on a fool's cap. *Ps.* cx. 3. *Heb.* xii. 2. Mr. ELISHA COLE.

254 Seeking a pure life without a pure nature is building without a foundation: and no seeking a new nature from the law; for it bids make bricks without straw, and saith to the cripple, walk, without giving any strength. *Jer.* xiii. 23. *Rom.* viii. 8.

Mr. MARSHAL.

255 Whatever we do of ourselves, in answer to our convictions, is a covering, not a cleansing: and if we die in this condition, unwashed, uncleansed, unpurified,

it is utterly impossible that ever we should be admitted into the blessed presence of the holy God, *Rev.* xxi. 27. Let no man deceive you with vain words. It is not the doing a few good works, it is not an outward profession of religion, that will give you an access with joy unto God. Shame will cover you when it will be too late. Unless you are washed by the Spirit of God, and in the blood of Christ, from the pollutions of your natures, you shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10, 11. Yea, you will be an horrid spectacle unto saints and angels, yea, to yourselves, to one another, when the shame of your nakedness shall be made to appear. If therefore you would not perish, and that eternally; if you would not perish as base, defiled creatures, an abhorring unto all flesh, then, when your pride, and your wealth, and your beauty, and your ornaments, and your duties, will stand you in no stead; look out betimes after that only way of purifying and cleansing your souls which God hath ordained. *Heb.* ix. 22. 1 *John* i. 7. 1 *Pet.* i. 18, 19. Dr. Owen.

256 By raising any soul from death in sin, God doth evidence the particular value of Christ's blood for that soul; as he did, in raising Christ, evidence the general fulness of that satisfaction. And this he will do, even to the end of the world. All his grace in all ages, even to the end of the

world, shall run through this channel, to put credit and honor upon Christ. Now, the greater the sin is that is pardoned, and the greater the sinner is that is converted, the more it shews the sufficiency of the price Christ paid. 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. *Rev.* v. 9.

Mr. CHARNOCK.

257 To go and venture upon God, upon the freedom of his grace, upon the promises of God, upon the commands of God, and to stand at God's arbitrement, and to refer a man's will to his will, and to cast a man's self into those everlasting arms, it is as if a man should leave his own standing, and cast himself into the arms of a mighty giant that stands upon another pinacle; one whom he also has often wronged and abused; and he himself hath no hands to lay upon him neither, but he must depend upon his catching him: here is the greatest venture, the greatest trust, the greatest self denial that can be. Thus the heart throws itself out of all possibilities, and submits to the free-grace of God in Christ: and this is done in believing. *Isa.* viii. 17. l. 10. *Ps.* lxii. 8.

258 By nature a man loadeth himself with a world of vanities; he is shipped for this world: and that is it which his eye aimeth at, to make himself happy in the world in something or other. Now, my brethren, God meets him in the way, takes him off from all the ends that were for

himself, putteth in a new pilot, setteth up a new load-star, giveth him a new compass; sendeth his blessed Spirit into his heart, that, as a wind, bloweth him clean another way: all the lading he hath by nature, he throweth them all clean over board. Thus God dealeth with a man when he turneth him, *Eph.* ii. 13. *Phil.* iii. 7, 8. *Hos.* xiv. 3. Paul was a ship richly laden. I was a scholar, saith he, and profited in the Jewish language more than all my teachers: I had much to boast of. God comes, and He thorws them all overboard. I count all things but as dross and dung in comparison of the knowledge of Christ. What made Paul do this? God had touched his heart with this loadstone, to the direction of which all must be conformed; and now, saith he, I must needs aim at God's glory in all things: herein lieth the work of conversion. Now to work such a work as this in a man, to touch a man's heart thus, is as much as to throw the earth off its centre. If you should see the earth go off its centre, and fix itself in the same sphere with the sun, and go along with the same pace and with the same motion, you would think an almighty power must go to do all this. This God doth. If a man moveth himself, though it be to God, as self-love will sometimes do, yet still he is upon his own centre; all is for himself. God cometh and turneth him off his own hinges,

takes him off from his own bottom, placeth him in the same sphere with himself, makes him aim at him in all things. This is holiness: and to put this principle into a man's heart, nothing but the almighty power of God can do it: it is above all the creation. *Eph.* i. 19. ii. 7, 10. *Acts* xx. 24.

Dr. Goodwin.

259 All unregenerate persons, whether Jews or Gentiles, will have a fling at the gospel; it is contrary to them, and they are contrary to it; they cannot reach the mystery of it, and therefore do slight and contemn it. But all who are effectually called, and savingly enlightened, do highly prize it: they see much of the power and wisdom of God in that excellent contrivance of man's salvation by Christ; they desire to know nothing but Christ, and Him crucified. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3.

Mr. Tho. Cole.

260 The reason of an unregenerate man's unwillingness to holy duties lies in this, that they are appointed, and the tendency of them is, to bring God and their hearts together; which is indeed to bring two enemies together; for such are their hearts and God. And the reason of a regenerate man's willingness is, that in the duty two friends meet together; God, who hath from everlasting owned the soul, and the soul who hath chosen God to be his God. *Job* xxi. 14. *Ps.* lxxiii. 25. xliii. 4. Dr. Goodwin.

261 It is a great concernment to know that the scripture hath such a witness as experience, and that there is such a trade and correspondence as this betwixt the saints and the word, which lieth not in the common road of the world. O what an empty thing would religion be, if it had not this word experience in its grammar; that secret and sure mark whereby the christian knoweth the scripture is of God; how thus the Lord hath often sealed their instruction in a dark plunge! *John* iv. 42. O what an excellent interpreter is experience; Taste and see! for thus the serious christian getteth a view of the scripture and spiritual things, which the most subtile and piercing eye of unsanctified schoolmen cannot reach, *Ps.* xxxiv. 8. cxvi. 10. 2 *Tim.* i. 12. 1 *Pet.* ii. 3. *Gal.* ii. 16. *Heb.* iv. 3. But O! this cannot be found in books; men will not meet with it in a throng of choicest notions; it confoundeth the wise and disputer of this world; while the meanest and most simple christian often knoweth more than those of greatest parts. 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. *Matth.* xi. 25.

262 Doth not this argument of experience, by a very clear demonstration, witness that great truth of a Godhead, whereon the whole superstructure of truth and godliness doth stand? yea, in another manner doth enforce on men the persuasion of this by a more near and convincing discov-

ery than the greatest works of God, or those glorious appearances of his power and wisdom in the heavens and earth do? It is true, these bring Him near to our eye and ear: but O! this brings the blessed and invisible God nearer, into the heart and soul, that we may both taste and see that surely He is, and is that which in the scripture He is declared to be. It is not the contemplation of nature, in its highest flight, can answer such an assault of the devil, which may overtake the most established Christian about the being of God. But there is a demonstration within, which goes farther than the judgment, and passeth natural understanding; whence we feel, we taste, we enjoy; yea, his voice is heard in the soul, which we surely know to be His. 1 *John* i. 3. 1 *Pet.* ii. 3. *Ps.* lxxxix. 15. Mr. Fleming.

263 There is nothing of more certainty to the souls of any than what they have real spiritual experience of. When the things about which men are conversant lie only in notion, and are rationally discoursed or debated, much deceit may lie under all: but, when the things between God and the soul come to be realized by practical experience, they give a never-failing certainty of themselves. *Ps.* cxvi. 10. *John* vi. 69.

264 When the heart is cast indeed into the mould of the doctrine that the mind embraceth, when the evidence and necessity of the truth abides in us, when not only the

sense of the words is in our heads, but the sense of the things abides in our hearts, when we have communion with God in the doctrines we contend for, then shall we be garrisoned by the grace of God against all the assaults of men ; and without this, all our contending is, as to ourselves, of no value. What am I the better, if I can dispute that Christ is God, but have no sense or sweetness in my heart from hence, that He is a God in covenant with my soul ? What will it avail me to evince by testimonies and arguments, that He hath made satisfaction for sin, if through my unbelief the wrath of God abides upon me, and I have no experience of my own being made the righteousness of God in Him ; if I find not, in my standing before God, the excellency of having my sins imputed to Him, and his righteousness imputed to me ? Will it be any advantage to me in the issue, to profess and dispute that God works the conversion of a sinner by the irresistable grace of his Spirit, if I was never acquainted experimentally with the deadness and utter impotence to good, that opposition to the law of God which is in my own soul by nature, with the efficacy of the exceeding greatness of the power of God, in quickening, enlightening, and bringing forth the fruits of obedience in me ? *Rev.* iii. 1. 1 *Cor.* i. 24. ii. 5. It is the power of the truth in the heart alone that will make us cleave unto it indeed in the

hour of temptation. Let us not then think that we are any thing the better for our conviction of the truths of the great doctrines of the gespel, for which we contend, unless we find the power of the truths abiding in our own hearts, and have a continual experience of their necessity and excellency in in our standing before God, and our communion with him. 1 *Thes.* i. 5. 2 *Tim.* i. 12. Dr. OWEN.

265 Experience is indeed a strong demonstration, and it is such a witness as leaves no room for debate; for here the truth is felt, proved, and acted on the heart, which the Christian knoweth well, and is as sure of, as he is persuaded that he liveth, or that the sun, when it shineth, hath life and warmness therewith. It is true, the world liveth at a great distance with this; they only converse with the sound of such a thing: and we know the naked theory of scripture-truth hath but a short reach, and that it differs as far from that which a serious practical Christian hath, as the sight of a country in a map is from the real discovery of the same; where the difference is not in the degree, but in the kind. *Ps.* xxxiv. 8. lxiii. 1 to 7. 1 *Pet.* ii. 3.

Mr. FLEMING.

266 Consider with thyself, when thou comest to die, what wilt thou say then? Satan will come then and lay thy sins to thy charge. Thou must think what thou hast

to answer. Thou hast nothing to say but, I am in Christ. Well; but how dost thou prove that? He will ask thee that question, Art thou a new creature? If thou findest that thou art not a new creature, thou art not in Christ; and thou needest not a new condemnation, thou art condemned already, *John* iii. 3, 18. Now examine, Canst thou do that which no man else can do that is a mere natural man? Thou must have a strength put into thee which none can reach that hath nothing but nature in him. Canst thou love the Lord Jesus and the saints? An hypocrite can counterfeit many things, but not love. Again, canst thou delight in the law of God in the inward man? I ask not if thou canst approve of it; but canst thou delight in it, counting it as thy meat and drink to do the will of thy Father? This is a thing which cannot be counterfeited. So, canst thou deny thyself? I ask not if thou canst deny this or that particular sin, but the whole body of sin; if thou favorest the things of the Spirit; if thou canst mortify the deeds of the body, and walk according to the Spirit? If thou art a new creature, thou must find thyself able to do that which no natural man can do, and which thyself could never do before. For otherwise, what wilt thou answer for thyself when the destroying angel shall come? If he find not in thee more than nature, the destruction shall pass on thee: as it was in the

passover ; except there was found blood on the door-posts, they died for it. Now the blood that this destroying angel must see, when he shall pass over the world, is that which is more than nature : you must know the blood of Christ leaves an impression ; their garments were made white in the blood of the Lamb ; that is, not only the guilt of sin is taken away, but a new virtue is put on them, a new efficacy is put into them : and if thou hast not the virtue of the blood of Christ as well to purge thy conscience from dead works as to take away the guilt of sin, all is nothing. I say, except thou art a new creature, the destroying angel shall not spare thee, but thy sins shall be cast on thy conscience : and, when God shall cast it on thy conscience, what wilt thou say ? If thou findest not these two things, a weakening of this old nature, an healing of sin, and some thing more than nature, thou canst not apply the comfort of justification, thou art not in Christ ; for thou art not a new creature, which consists of these two parts, vivification and mortification. *Rom.* vi. 22· viii. 5, 6. 2 *Cor.* v. 17. vi. 17. *Eph.* ii. 10. iv. 22, 23, 24. v. 27. *Col.* i. 21. 2 *Tim.* ii. 19.

Dr. Preston.

267 There is nothing that doth truly and unfeignedly root wickedness out of the heart of man, but only the true tranquility of the mind, or the rest of the soul in God.

And, to say as the thing is, This is such a peace and such a rest to the creature in the Creator, that, according to the measure of its establishment by faith, no created comprehensible thing can either add to it or detract from it: the increase of a kingdom cannot augment it, the greatest losses and crosses in worldly things cannot diminish it. A believer's good works do all flow from it. Neither sin nor Satan, law nor conscience, hell nor grave, can quite extinguish it; for it is the Lord alone that maintains it. It is the pleasant face of God in Christ that puts gladness into his heart, *Ps.* iv. 7. and when that face is hid, then is he troubled, *Ps.* xxx. 7. Though the peace and joy of true believers may be extenuated or diminished, yet doth the testimony of their being, in nature remain so strong, that they could skill to say, yea, even when they have felt God to be withdrawing himself from them, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, *Ps.* xxii. 1, yea, and in the night of God's absence to remain confident, that though sorrow be over night, yet joy will come in the morning: nay, though the Lord should seem to kill them with unkindness, yet will they put their trust in him, knowing that, for all this, their Redeemer liveth: so strong is their joy in the Lord. These are the people that are kept in perfect peace, because their minds are stayed on the Lord, *Isa.* xxvi. 3. Wherefore take

heed of deeming any state happy, until you come to find this true peace and rest to your souls in God. *Hos.* vi. 1. *Isa.* xlviii. 22. *Job* xiii. 15, 19, 25.

MARR. MOD. DIVIN.

268 In the present beholding the glory of Christ the life and power of faith are most eminently acted: and from this exercise of faith doth love unto Christ principally (if not solely) arise and spring. If therefore we desire to have faith in its vigor, or love in its power, giving rest, complacency, and satisfaction to our own souls, we are to seek for them in the diligent discharge of this duty; elsewhere they will not be found. Herein would I live, herein would I die; herein would I dwell in my thoughts and affections, to the withering and consumption of all the painted beauties of this world, unto the crucifying all things here below, until they become unto me a dead and deformed thing, no way meet for affectionate embraces, *Phil.* iii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

269 Hath he the heart of a Christian who doth not often meditate on the death of his Saviour, who doth not derive his life from it? Who can look into the gospel and not fix on those lines which either immediately and directly, or through some other paths of divine grace and wisdom, do lead him thereunto? Can any have believing thoughts concerning the death of Christ, and not have his heart affected with ardent love unto his

person ? Christ in the gospel is evidently set forth crucified before us. Can any by the eye of faith look on this blessed dying Redeemer, and suppose love unto his person to be nothing but the work of fancy or imagination ? they know the contrary who always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, as the apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* iv. 10. As his whole name, in all that he did, is as ointment poured forth ; for which the virgins love him, *Song* i. 3. so this precious perfume of his death is that wherewith their hearts are ravished in a peculiar manner. 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. 1 *Cor.* ii. 2.

270 The principal design of their whole lives, to whom Christ is precious, is to acquaint themselves with him ; the mystery of the wisdom, grace, and love of God in his person and mediation, as revealed unto us in the scripture, which is life eternal, *John* xvii. 3, to trust in him and unto him as to all the everlasting concernments of their souls, to love and honor him with all their hearts, to endeavor after conformity unto him in all those characters of divine goodness and holiness which are represented unto them in him. In these things consist the soul, life, power, beauty and excellency, and efficacy of the Christian religion ; without which, whatever outward ornaments may be put upon its exercise, it is but a

useless, lifeless carcass. *Phil.* iii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Dr. Owen.

271 See to whom you are beholden for your lives, liberties, comforts, and all that you enjoy in this world. Is it not Christ, who orders all for you? He indeed is in heaven, out of your sight; but, though you see him not, he sees you, and takes care of all your concerns. In all thy ways acknowledge him, *Prov.* iii. 6. It is he that hath espied out that state thou art in, as most proper for thee. It is Christ that hath done all for thee that is done. He looks down from heaven upon all that fear him: He sees when you are in danger by temptation, and casts in a providence (you know not how) to hinder it: He sees when you are sad and orders reviving providences to refresh you: he sees when corruption prevail, and orders humbling providences to purge them: whatever mercies you have received, all along the way you have gone hitherto, are the orderings of Christ for you. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5. *Ps.* xxxvii. 23. *Jer.* x. 23. 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Mr. Flavel.

272 Of all acts of faith, this of pure trust doth honor God most, and hath indeed more of faith in it: the purer the trust is, the greater the trust is; and the greater the trust is, the greater the faith is; and the greater the faith, the more honor comes to God. The end why God hath ordained faith is, that his free grace might be glorified:

now his free grace is glorified by no act of faith more than by this of pure trusting in him. In *Rom.* iv. 20, where Abraham's faith is set out to us, it is set out by this, that he gave glory to God. You do not honor God so much by your love, you do not honor him so much by being assured of his love, as you do by trusting in his love. It magnifies the sovereignty of God, which God aims at to magnify in our salvation: it leaves the soul at God's feet; for that is the posture of the soul, when it says, Here am I, and I will trust in thee alone. It magnifies the faithfulness of God; and faithfulness is that attribute which, in one that makes a promise, is the chief thing he aims at. Now faith takes hold on Christ through a promise; therefore it is a grace suited and fitted to magnify the faithfulness of God more than loving him. If a man have assurance, he doth glorify God in a way of rejoicing, in a way of triumphing, in a way of thankfulness; but pure trust doth glorify God another way, it glorifies God in a way of obedience. Often times a man trusteth God for the salvation of his soul, and goes on so to do, and doth not of a long time know that God hath received him; he hath not received an earnest penny a long while of what he trusted God for (for joy in the Holy Ghost is the reward of faith.) Now, to stand thus out of purse for many years before a man receives a penny, this is a great and mighty trust.

For a man to venture to sea without either sail, oar, or mast, or any thing of his own, and to be wafted by Jesus Christ and free grace, to commit himself to those winds which shall blow from him from that promise he makes; this is the great trust: and this the soul doth when he comes to Christ. *Job* xiii. 15. *Isa.* l. 10. *Dan.* iii. 17, 18. *Jon.* ii. 4. *John* vi. 68, 69.

Dr. GOODWIN.

273 Doctrines of the greatest weight are talked of and treated about with a vain, unconcerned frame of spirit, as if men contended about opinions and school-points, rather than about the oracles of God and matters of faith. But if men's hearts were seen by themselves, if sin were felt, if men's conscience were enlivened, if God's holy law were known in its exactness and severity, and the glory and the majesty of the lawgiver shining before men's eyes, if men were living as leaving time and launching forth into eternity, the gospel salvation by Jesus Christ would be more regarded. *Acts* xvi. 29, 30. *Mic.* vi. 6, 7.

Mr. TRAIL.

274 Those that receive Christ with an unfeigned faith shall never want a wedding-garment to adorn them in the sight of God. Faith itself is very precious in the sight of God, and most holy, 2 *Pet.* i. 1. *Jude* 20. God loves it because it giveth the glory of our salvation only to the free grace of God

in Christ, *Rom.* iv. 16. and renounceth all dependance on any conditions that we can perform to procure a right to Christ, or to make ourselves acceptable to Him. The excellency of faith lies in this, that it accounteth not itself, nor any other work of ours, a sufficient ornament to make us acceptable in the sight of God. It will not be our wedding-garment itself; but it buyeth of Christ white raiment that we may be clothed, and that the shame of our nakedness may not appear, *Rev.* iii, 18. Mr. MARSHAL.

275 That faith which works in the soul a gracious persuasion of the excellency of this way, by a sight of the glory of the wisdom, power, grace, love and goodness of God in it, so as to be satisfied with it as the best, the only way of coming unto God, with a renunciation of all other ways and means unto that end, will at all times evidence its nature and sincerity. *John* vi. 68, 69. *Phil.* iii. 3. Dr. OWEN.

276 Faith embraceth the knowledge of the mystery of God and Christ in the light of grace; the truth of which mystery the believer acknowledgeth with full consent of mind on the authority of the testimony of God; and not only so, but he loveth the truth, rejoiceth in it, and glorifieth God, and most earnestly desires communion with Christ, that those things which are true in Christ may be true also to him for salvation: wherefore, when Christ is offered to

him by the word and spirit, he receiveth him with the greatest willingness of mind, he leans upon him, he rests upon him, and gives up himself wholly to him; which being done, he now glorieth that he is his, and in him most pleasantly delighteth, resting under the shadow of the tree of life, and satiating himself with his most sweet fruits. This is the faith of God's elect, the invaluable gift, the bond of our union with Christ, the heavenly ladder, the key of the ark of the covenant, by which are unlocked the treasures thereof, the never-ceasing fountain of a holy, happy, quiet life. *Heb.* xi.

Mr. HERM. WITSIUS.

277 The soul that is under the conduct of faith is not capable of any one desire that any thing were otherwise than it is in the will of God concerning our holiness and obedience, no more than it can desire that God should not be what he is. *Ps.* xxx. 4. cxix. 128. Dr. OWEN.

278 The gospel doth these two things, *viz.* It sets before us our lost undone condition by nature, and shews us the remedy in Christ; always offering mercy in Christ to all whom God calls to repentance: it is inconsistent with the goodness and wisdom of God to do otherwise; evangelical repentance must be from evangelical motives. This offer of grace and pardon in Christ must be proposed to our hearers; and, when proposed, it must be believed in some

degree of saving faith before a sinner can entertain one serious thought of evangelical repentance. This offer of mercy received by faith implies a secret hope of pardon, which I conceive is the first saving work upon the soul. Faith, being thus wrought, causes a looking unto Christ only for salvation, and a secret reliance upon him for salvation: and such a faith, wrought in never so low a degree, I take to be true, saving, justifying faith. This faith includes in it the seeds of all other graces, which spring up under the influences of faith according to the degree of it. This faith works by love, and causes true evangelical repentance, which though it be no cause of our justification, yet it is always an effect of justifying faith, found in all who are justified. *Jer.* xxxi. 19. *Luke* xix. 8.

Mr. Tho. Cole.

279 Faith doth engraft a man, who is by nature a wild olive-branch, into Christ, as into the natural olive, and fetcheth sap from the root Christ, and thereby makes the tree bring forth fruit in its kind; yea, faith fetcheth a supernatural efficacy from the death and life of Christ, by virtue whereof it metamorphoseth the heart of a believer, and createth and infuseth into him new principles of action; so that what a treasure of all graces Christ hath stored up in him, faith draineth and draweth them out to the use of a believer; being as a conduit-cock, that

watereth all the herbs in the garden ; yea, faith doth apply the blood of Christ to a believer's heart, and the blood of Christ hath in it, not only a power to wash from the guilt of sin, but to cleanse and purge likewise from the power and stain of sin. And therefore, saith godly Hooker, if you would have grace, you must first of all get faith, and that will bring all the rest. Let faith go to Christ, and there is meekness, patience, humility, and wisdom, and faith will fetch all them to the soul ; therefore, saith he, you must not look for sanctification till you come to Christ in vocation. *John* xv. 4, 5. *Phil.* iv. 13. MARR. MOD. DIVIN.

280 True, saving, justifying faith carries the soul through all difficulties, discouragements, and natural impossibilities, to Jesus Christ. *Rom.* iv. 19.

Mr. BRIDGE.

281 But it remains that we inquire how faith justifies. Certainly not in that sense, as though God graciously accepts the act of faith, and new evangelical obedience proceeding from faith, in the room of that perfect obedience which, according to the strictness of the law, we ought to have : for this were to make void the whole gospel. In the room of perfect obedience, which the law requires to justification, the gospel hath not substituted our faith, but the obedience of Christ, by which the righteousness of the law is fulfilled : and

it is false, that faith and our obedience are one and the same thing. I confess, faith is virtue commanded by the law of God, and that the believer, so far as he believes, does obey God. I confess again, no faith is to be accounted true and living which is not big with good works. But yet faith is one thing, and obedience flowing from faith quite another thing, especially in the business of justification, of which we treat, for Paul always contradistinguisheth all manner of works from faith. Lastly, neither the truth nor righteousness of God suffers, that our faith and obedience, which are imperfect, should be admitted as perfect: for it is the will of God, that the righteousness of the law should be fulfilled in our justification, not that any thing should derogate from it. *Gal.* iii. 10.

282 Nothing can avail in the business of justification unless it be plainly perfect, and in all things answer to the law of God. For in justification there is a declaration of the righteousness of God, *Rom.* iii. 25, 26. For that requires that the righteousness of the law be fulfilled, *Rom.* viii. 4. And the righteousness of the law cannot be fulfilled but by a perfect obedience. This no man can challenge to himself but a vain boaster and a liar: from whence we conclude, that no sinner can be justified by any act of his own, *Rom.* iii. 20. The apostle rests upon this axiom, That the righteousness which

will be of any avail before the tribunal of God must in all points be perfect ; but, seeing no works of any man are so, he concludes, that no works of any sort can confer any thing to justification. The apostle, without doubt, excludes all those works on which they who endeavor to establish their own righteousness do commonly rest : and of those, it is not credible that there hath been any one who through the whole course of their lives will say, that they have kept themselves undefiled with the least spot or stain of sin. *Eccles.* vii. 20.

283 Justification is a judicial act of God, but free, whereby an elect believing sinner is absolved from the guilt of his sins, and a right adjudged to him of eternal life, for and because of the obedience of Christ, received by faith. *Rom.* v. 1.

Mr. HERM. WITSIUS.

284 The lowest true faith will do its work safely, though not so sweetly : true faith, in the lowest degree, gives the soul a share in the first resurrection : it is of the vital principle which we receive when we are quickened. Now be it never so weak a life we have, yet it is a life that shall never fail ; it is of the seed of God which abideth, incorruptible seed that dieth not. A believer is spirit, is quickened from the dead ; be he never so young, never so sick, never so weak, he is still alive, and the second death shall have no power over him. A little faith

gives a whole Christ : he that hath the lowest faith hath as true an interest in the righteousness of Christ as the most steadfast believer. Others may be more holy than he, but not one in the world more righteous than he ; for he is righteous with the righteousness of Christ. He cannot but be low in sanctification ; for a little faith will bring forth but little or low obedience : if the root be weak, the fruit will not be great ; but he is beneath none in justification. The most imperfect faith will give present justification, because it interests the soul in a present Christ : the lowest degree of true faith gives the highest completeness of righteousness. You, who have but a weak faith, have yet a strong Christ ; so that, though all the world should set itself against your little faith, it should not prevail : sin cannot do it, Satan cannot do it, hell cannot do it : though you take but weak and faint hold on Christ, he takes sure, strong, and unconquerable hold on you. Have you not often wondered that this spark of heavenly fire should be kept alive in the midst of the sea ? It is everlasting, a spark that cannot be quenched, a drop of that fountain that cannot be dried up. Jesus Christ takes special care of them that are weak in the faith ; on what account soever they are sick and weak and unable, this good Shepherd takes care of them ; he shall rule, and they shall abide. *Mic.* v. 4.

Col. ii. 10. *John* x. 28. *Mark* ix. 24. *Luke* vii. 50. Dr. Owen.

285 Christ maintains a little grace in his children amidst many strong corruptions and lusts: grace is but a little grain, and yet it lives and thrives; it is an abiding seed, under continual influences from Christ. 1 *John* iii. 5. *John* xiv. 19. Mr. T. Cole.

286 By the bare word of God it is that the heavens continue, and the earth (without any other foundation) hangs in the midst of the air; therefore well may the soul stay itself upon that, even when it hath nothing else in sight to stay itself upon. By his word it is that the covenant of day and night, and the preservation of the world from any farther overflowings of waters, continueth; which if it should fail, yet his covenant with his people shall abide firm for ever; though the whole frame of nature were dissolved. *Heb.* i. 3. *Jer.* xxxiii. 20, 21. Dr. Sibbs.

287 The almighty architect stretches out the north, and its whole starry train, over the empty space: he hangs the earth and all the ætherial globes upon nothing: yet are their foundations laid so sure, that they can never be moved at any time. No unfit representation to the sincere Christian of his final perseverance; but such as points out the cause that effects it, and constitutes the pledge which ascertains it. His nature is all enfeebled, he is not able of himself to think a good thought, he has no visible safeguard,

nor any sufficiency of his own; and yet, whole legions of formidable enemies are combined to compass his ruin. The world lays unnumbered snares for his feet; the devil is incessantly urging the siege by a multitude of fiery darts or wily temptations; the flesh, like a perfidious inmate, under color of friendship and a specious pretence of pleasure, is always forward to betray his integrity: but, amidst all these threatening circumstances of personal weakness and imminent danger, and invisible aid is his defence. I will uphold thee (says the blessed God) with the right hand of my righteousness. O comfortable truth! The arm which fixeth the stars in their courses, and guides the planets in theirs, is stretched out to preserve the heirs of salvation. My sheep (adds the great Redeemer) are mine; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. What words are these! And did they come from Him who hath all power in heaven and earth? And were they spoken to every unfeigned though feeble follower of the great Shepherd? Then Omnipotence itself must be vanquished before they can be destroyed, either by the seductions of fraud or the assaults of violence. If you ask therefore what securety we have of enduring to the end, and continuing faithful unto death? The very same that establishes the heavens, and settles the ordinances of the universe. Can these be thrown into con-

fusion ? Then may the true believer draw back unto perdition. Can the sun be dislodged from his sphere, and rush lawlessly through the sky ? Then, and then only, can the faith of God's elect be overthrown finally. Be of good courage then, O my soul ; rely on those divine succours which are so solemnly stipulated, so faithfully promised. Though thy grace be languid as the glimmering spark—though the overflowings of corruption threaten it with total extinction ; yet, since the Great Jehovah has undertaken to cherish the dim principle, many waters cannot quench it, nor the floods drown it. Nay, though it were feeble as the smoking flax, almighty goodness stands engaged to augment the heat, to raise the fire, and feed the flame, till it beam forth a lamp of immortal glory in the heavens. *Isa.* xlii. 3. *Song* viii. 7. *Isa.* xli. 10. *John* x. 28. Mr. James Hervey.

288 Unto the power of God is our perseverance wholly attributed, 1 *Pet.* i. 5. Ye are kept (as with a garrison, as the word signifies) through the power of God unto salvation. And were there not a great and an apparent danger of miscarrying, such a mighty guard would not be needed. There is nothing puts us into such danger as our corruptions that still remain in us, which fight against the soul, and endeavor to overcome and distroy us. Now then, to be kept, maugre all these ; to have grace maintained,

a spark of grace in the midst of a sea of corruption; how doth this honor the power of God in keeping us! How will the grace of God under the gospel triumph over the grace of God given Adam in innocency! When Adam having his heart full of inherent grace, and nothing inwardly in his nature to seduce him, and the temptation that he had being but matter of curiosity, and the pleasing his wife, yet he fell. When as many poor souls under the state of grace, that have but mites of grace in comparison, and worlds of corruption, are yet kept, not only from the unnecessary pleasures of sin in time of prosperity, but hold out against all the threats, all the cruelties of wicked persecutors in the time of persecution, which threatens to debar them of all the present good they enjoy! And though God's people are often foiled, yet that there should still remain a seed within them. This illustrates the grace of Christ under the gospel. For one act in Adam expelled all grace out of him, when yet his heart was full of nothing else. Were our hearts filled with grace perfectly at first conversion, this power would not be seen; neither would the confusion of the devil be so great, and the victory so glorious, if all sin were at first conversion expelled. For by this means the devil in his assaults against us hath the more advantages, fair play, (as I may say) fair hopes of overcoming, having a great faction in us as ready to sin as he is

greedy to tempt; and yet God carries on his own work begun, though slowly and by degrees, backeth and maintaineth a small party of grace within us to his confusion. That as, in God's outward government towards his church here on earth, he suffers a great party, the greater by far, to be against his church, and yet upholds it, and rules among the midst of his enemies, *Ps.* cx. 2, so doth he also in every particular believer's heart. When grace shall be in us but as a spark, and corruptions as much smoke and moisture damping it; grace but as a candle, and that in the socket, among huge and many winds; then to bring forth judgement unto victory, that is a victory indeed. *Isa.* xlii. 3. 1 *John* iii. 9, Dr. GOODWIN.

289 Constancy in gospel obedience is the beauty and glory of it. All that profess godliness keep the law now and then; but the excellency of it lies in constancy. *Ps.* cxix. 33, 112. *Matth.* xxiv. 13. *Heb.* x. 29. Mr. THO COLE.

290 If God has made thee (of a great sinner) the object of his mercy, thou mayest be assured of a continuance of his love. He pardoned thee when thou wast an enemy; will he leave thee now thou art his friend? He loved thee when thou hadst razed out in a great measure his image and picture, which he had set in thy soul; will he hate thee now, since he has restored that image, and drawn it with fresh colors? He justified

thee when thou wast ungodly; and will he cast thee off since he hath been at such pains about thee, and written in thee a counterpart of his own divine nature in the work of grace? Were his bowels first moved when thou hadst no grace; and will they not sound louder when thou hast grace? Thou hadst a rich present of his grace sent thee when thou couldst not pray for it; and will he not much more give thee whatever is needful, when thou callest upon him? He was found of thee when thou didst not seek him; and will he hide himself from thee when thou art inquiring after him? God considered, before he began with thee, what charge thou wouldst stand him in, both of merit in Christ, and of grace in thee; so that the grace he hath given thee is not only a mercy to thee, but an obligation on himself, since his credit is engaged to complete it. Thou hast more unanswerable arguments to plead before him than thou hadst; *viz.* his Son, his truth, his promise, his grace, his name, wherein before thou hadst not the least interest. To what purpose hath God called thee and washed thee, if he did not intend to supply thee with as much grace as shall bring thee to glory? Hath God given thee Christ, and will he detain any thing else? *Ezek.* xvi. 8. *Isa.* lxv. 1. *Matth.* vii. 7. *Rom.* viii. 32.

Mr. Charnock.

291 Well, Christ is in heaven, our true treasure, whither neither the thief, nor moth, nor canker can come. This is our happiness, that he keepeth our treasure; it is out of the reach of devils and men; were it in our hands we would soon betray it. If we are set in heaven with Christ, Christ may as soon be pulled out of heaven as we disappointed of our inheritance. *Matth.* vi. 19, 20. *John* xiv. 19. Mr. BAIN.

292 A saint may be brought very low, but he can never fall below a promise: he may lose estate, friends, and health, and much of the presence of God; but, if once in covenant with God, he can never lose the promise: the word of the Lord endures forever. There is my comfort. *Ps.* cxix. 92. Mr. THO. COLE.

293 Faith's assurance, that in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting strengh, even while we have not the experience of the communications of it, is a cordial against fainting. *Isa.* xxvi. 4. Mr. HALYBURTON.

294 Perturbation, sorrows, dread, dejections, fears, are no duty unto any; only they are such things as sometimes ensue, or are immitted into the mind, upon that which is a duty indispensible, namely, the conviction of sin. They belong not to the precept of the law, but to its curse; they are no part of what is required of us, but of what is inflicted on us. There is a gospel sorrow and humiliation after believing that

is a duty, that is both commanded and hath promises annexed to it; but this legal sorrow is an effect of the curse of the law, not of its command. And God is pleased to exercise a prerogative and sovereignty in this whole matter, and deals with the souls of men in an unspeakable variety. Some he leads by the gates of death and hell to rest in his love, like the people of old through the waste and howling wilderness into Canaan; and the paths of others he makes plain and easy to them: some walk for wander long in darkness; in the souls of others Christ is formed in the first gracious visitation. 2 *Cor.* vii. 9, 10. Dr. Owen.

295 Men may love their friends more than they can help them; but the loving-kindness of God is attended with a power as infinite as itself. *Ps.* cxlvi. 5. *Jer.* xxxii. 27. Mr. Charnock.

296 The believing soul, knowing, acknowledging, and loving the truths of salvation, cannot but wish that all those things which are true in Christ may be true also to him, and that he may be sanctified and blessed according to and by those truths; and sincerely desires that he, being by sin alienated from the life of God, may again by free justification, and in and through sanctification, be sealed up to the glory of God. This is the hunger and thirst after righteousness mentioned *Matth.* v. 6. And, I pray, what reason can there be, why he who be-

lieves and perceives in himself that he is most miserable, and is most fully persuaded that by nothing, neither in heaven nor in earth, he can be free from his misery; who also sees there is a fullness of salvation in Christ, and is certain he can never obtain salvation unless he be united to Christ; who from his very soul loves the truth of the fulness of salvation in Christ alone and communion with him; that he, I say, should not seriously and ardently desire to have Christ dwelling in him: and this he should seek after, this he should press after, and with such a desire as can never be satisfied but by the possession of the thing desired; as hunger and thirst are not allayed but by food and drink. *Phil.* iii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Mr. Herm. Witsius.

297 How strange is formality in such a business as prayer! which is an address to the living God, one of the most solemn acts of the soul; yea, we may call it the most natural act of a Christian, like the breathing of the child after the breast! Alas! it is sad that many times this seems rather a piece of invention than a matter of earnest with the Lord; not so much the breathing of the soul after him, as the expressing what should be our desires! O to what class can such a peice of atheism be reduced as appears in our nearest approaches to God! Should we look on prayer as a duty, and not consider it as a singular enjoyment also,

without which this earth would have a near appearance of hell, if we could not thus solace the soul in God, and get a vent under its greatest pressures. O prayer! what thought should we have of it if the truth thereof were more believed! I think that man who is sure of the being and faithfulness of God, and of the reality of prayer, needs not be solicitous with what face the world looks on him, when thus his great interest and encouragement are secure, and a well is at hand that can answer all his complaints. *Ps.* xvii. 6. xxxiv. 5, 6.

Mr. Fleming.

298 Heartless, lifeless, wordy prayer, the fruit of convictions and gifts, or of custom and outward occasions, however multiplied, and whatever devotion they seem to be accompanied withal, will never engage spiritual affections to them. *Ps.* xvii. 5. *Hos.* vii. 14. Dr. Owen.

299 It is an astonishing thing to see, how, under frequency of prayer and a seeming fervency therein, many of us are at a stand as to visible thriving in fruits of grace, and it is to be feared without any increase of strength in the root of it; and, which is yet more astonishable, men abide in the duty of prayer, and that in constancy, in their families and otherwise, and yet live in known sins: and the fault and guilt is wholly their own, who have effected a consistency between a way in sinning and a course in praying:

and it ariseth from hence, that they have never labored to fill up their requests with grace. No man was ever absolutely prevailed on by sin, who prayed for deliverance according to the mind of God. Every praying man that perisheth was an hypocrite: the faithfulness of God in his promises will not allow us to judge otherwise, *Ps.* l. 15. xci. 15. For men to be earnest in prayer and thriftless in grace, is a certain indication of prevalent corruptions, and want of being spiritually minded in prayer itself. He who prays as he ought will endeavor to live as he prays. To pray earnestly and live carelessly, is to proclaim that a man is not spiritually minded in his prayer. We may hear prayers sometimes that openly discover themselves to spiritual sense to be the labor of the brain by the help of gifts, in memory and invention, without any evidence of any mixture of humility, reverence, or godly fear, without any acting of faith and love; they flow as wine, yet smell and taste of the unsavory cask from whence they proceed. *Ezek.* xx. 16. *Prov.* xv. 8.

Dr. Owen.

300 It were to be wished this great means of prayer, yet left to the church, were with more singleness and fervor improved, both by the christian alone and in converse with others. This is well known in the most dark and dismal times of her condition, what marvellous help it hath brought at a choke,

when it hath seemed in some manner the last effort of the church, and all other things gone. O a spirit of prayer! what remarkable advantage hath followed upon this! Thus hath the meanest of the saints access to do a great piece of service, even to the church universal, and the recovery again of the power of godliness, that is now so far gone. *Acts* xii. 5, 6, 11. *Esth.* iv. 16. *Isa.* lxii. 6, 7. Mr. FLEMING.

301 If you know the principles of prayer, and have a lively sense of your necessities, and hearty desire of God's grace and mercy, you will be able to pray without forms, and your affections will bring forth words out of the fulness of your heart; and you will not be over solicitous and timorous about words; for, doubtless, the Spirit who is the help to us in speaking to men, will also much more help us to speak to God, if we desire it: and God regards not eloquent words, nor artificial composure; neither need we regard it in private prayer. If you limit yourselves to form, you will thereby grow formal, and limit the Spirit. 1 *Cor.* i. 5. *Mark* xiii. 11. *Luke* xii. 12.

Mr. MARSHAL.

302 The richest saint must be (and is) a humble beggar at grace's door all his days; and Christ is the Lord of the house, and the dispenser of the alms; and as the alms is too good not to be patiently waited for, so the Lord is too good and too great to be quar-

relled with; and never did a believer get any good by complaining of him. Complain to him and pray and ask largely, but still with faith and patience. Knock at his door, but stay; and bless him that ever he gave you any crumbs of his grace: mix your prayers for new wanted grace with praises for his old dispensed grace. Christ loveth you, and hath proved it. Believe it, and bless him for it, and wait for his renewing his love to you; and in due time you will find that he will not only answer but out-do your desires to him, and all your expectations from him. *Gen.* xlix. 18. *Ps.* xxvii. 14. *Isa.* xl. 31. xlix. 23. Mr. Trail.

303 Do not say you cannot pray because you cannot speak much, or well, or long. Praying is wrestling with God: the heart is the wrestler; holy faith is the strength of it: if by means of this strength thy heart be a good wrestler, though thou art ever so tongue-tied, thou wilt be a prevailer. Rhetoric goes for little in the heavenly court, but sincere groans have a kind of omnipotency. *Neh.* ii. 4. *Isa.* xxxviii. 14.

Mr. Dan. Burgess.

304 Prayer is chiefly a heart work: God heareth the heart without the mouth, but never heareth the mouth acceptably without the heart. Your prayer is odious hypocrisy, mocking God, and taking his name in vain, when you utter petitions for the coming of his kingdom and the doing his will, and yet

hate godliness in your heart. This is lying unto God, and flattering him with your lips; but no true prayer; and so God takes it. 1 *Sam.* i. 13. *Ps.* xxvii. 8. lxxviii. 36.

Mr. MARSHAL.

305 To pray in the name of Christ is to pray in the faith of his name: we may pray with the name of Christ in our mouths, and yet not pray in his name, unless we pray with the faith of Christ in our hearts. *Matth.* xxi. 22. *John* xiv. 13.

ANONYMOUS.

306 Right believing is powerful praying: the knees, eyes, and tongue, bear the least share in prayer; the whole of the work lies upon the soul, and particularly upon faith in the soul, which is indeed the life and soul of prayer. Faith can pray without words; but the most elegant words, the phrase of angels, is not worthy to be called prayer without faith. *Luke* xi. 2. 1 *Cor.* xiv. 15.

Mr. SHAW.

307 Our prayers should run parellel to promises; we should ask nothing of God but what we have an intimation he will do for us: our needs and necessities would not be sufficient arguments; but the principal argument is the word of God. Finding a promise in the word, faith fixes there, and presseth God from it; and a believer so praying cannot be denied, unless God deny himself. The word of God is himself; it is his will: so the soul may go with a holy

boldness unto God; for the thing that is promised is half done. God may keep us in suspense a while; but he expects we should live upon the word, and hang on it till the time of the promise comes. All that faith labors for is to work the soul to assurance that God will deal with us according to his word. And if I can make it out that such a promise belongs to me, I have enough to live on. *Ps.* cxix. 49, 58.

Mr. Tho. Cole.

308 When a man is assured God hath given him his Son, he will then easily be induced to believe and expect, how shall he not with him give me all things? If once he looks upon God as a Father, he will then easily conceive what Christ says, If fathers that are evil can give good things to their children, how much more shall your Father give his Spirit to them that ask him? And if he gave his Son when we did not pray to him, how much more shall he with him give us all things we pray for? *Rom.* viii. 32. *Luke* xi. 13.

309 Dost thou pray with all thy might? then, though thy might be weak in itself, and in thine own apprehension such, yet because it is all the might thou hast, and which grace hath in thee, it shall be accepted: for God accepteth according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not. 2 *Cor.* viii. 12. Dr. Goodwin.

310 Our whole life should speak nothing but thankfulness; every condition and place we are in should be a witness of our thankfulness: this will make the times and places we live in the better for us. When we ourselves are monuments of God's mercy, it is fit we should be patterns of his praises, and leave monuments to others. We should think life is given us to do something better than to live in: we live, not to live; our life is not the end of itself, but the praise of the Giver. God hath joined his glory and our happiness together: it is fit that we should refer all that is good to his glory, who hath joined his glory to our best good in being glorified in our salvation, *Ps.* l. 14. cxvi. 17. Praise is a just and due tribute for all God's blessings; for what else do the best favors of God especially call for at our hands? How do all creatures praise God but by our mouths? It is a debt always owing, and always paying; and the more we pay, the more we shall owe; upon the due discharge of this debt, the soul will find much peace. A thankful heart to God for his blessings is the greatest blessing of all. Were it not for a few gracious souls, what honor should God have of the rest of the unthankful world? which should stir us up the more to be trumpets of God's praises in the midst of his enemies; because this (in some sort) hath a perogative above our praising God in heaven; for there God hath no enemies to

dishonor him. *Ps.* cxlv. 10, 11, 12. clxviii. cl. Dr. Sibs.

311 Then doth a man eat and drink to the glory of God, when, confessing that he is unworthy to enjoy this life and the comforts of it, he praises the bounty of God which bestows all things abundantly upon him; and principally admires the immense love of the Lord Jesus, who willingly sustained the want of all things delightful, and suffered himself to have vinegar and gall given him to drink, that it might be granted to those that are his by the divine favor to eat the fat and drink the sweet: when also he doth not so much delight in the creature and the gift as in a Creator and Giver, tasting with his utmost delight how sweet the Lord is: when from his heart he resolves to lay out that life which by these means is lengthened out, and all those faculties which are so continually preserved, in the service of God who gave and preserves them: lastly, when, from the pleasures of this natural life, he ascends by meditation nigh unto those incredible delights of the future and heavenly life, and, tasting them in his thoughts by faith, with a grateful mind he sings a song of love unto God: O Lord! if thou dost such great things for us in prison, what wilt thou do in the palace! *Isa.* lv. 2. *Heb.* xii. 22. xiii. 14, 15. Mr. Herm. Witsius.

312 Learn to value spiritual blessings and temporal likewise, not by the things them-

selves, but by the love of God from which they came. A small blessing may be out of abundance of love: God may abound in love to thee in bestowing it, when the blessing in the matter of it is but little. What is the reason that many good souls, who have true grace wrought in their hearts, are so very unthankful? They look to the grace wrought in them, and see there is but little of that: and they value all by what they find in themselves, by the blessing wrought; I find but little in me, if any at all: and while they thus value the blessing by what they find in themselves, they prove unthankful unto God. Whereas that little grace thou hast, that little faith, be it but as a grain of mustard-seed, it proceeds out of abundance of grace in God. God abounds infinitely in his love to thee, when thou hadst but the least beginnings of grace in thee, as small at first as Nicodemus had. *Eph.* i. 8. ii. 4. iii. 11. Dr. GOODWIN.

313 Let all seen enjoyments lead you to the unseen fountain from whence they flow. Never rest upon any thing you have, without you see God in it; and then be sure you rest not upon the enjoyment, but upon that God who manifests himself by it; for the enjoyment will quickly be gone, but the fountain will remain. *Ps.* lxiii. 3. *Jer.* xxxi. 3. *Isa.* liv. 8. Mr. HALYBURTON.

314 Where grace is, there will be no eminent mercy gotten with much struggling,

but there will be a particular thankful remembrance of it a long while after with much enlargement; and as prayer abounded, so will thanksgiving abound also. Great blessings, that are won with prayer, are worn with thankfulness: such a man will not ask new, but he will withal give thanks for old. Thankfulness, of all duties, proceeds from pure grace. Prayer and thanks are like the double motion of the lungs: the air that is sucked in by prayer is breathed forth again by thanks. *Eph.* v. 20. *Heb.* xiii. 15. *Ps.* l. 14. Dr. GOODWIN.

315 It is good to see blessings as they issue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing to see the love and favor of God in it, which is more to be valued than the blessing itself. *Ps.* lxiii. 3.

Dr. SIBS.

316 No mercy hath been more endeared than what hath broken out of the thickest cloud, or more full and sweet than what hath come after much patience and continued wrestlings. *Isa.* xxxviii. 16, 20. 1 *Sam.* i. 10, 11, 27, 28. ii. 1 to 10.

Mr. FLEMING.

317 Faith's discovery of forgiveness in God, though it have no present sense of its own peculiar interest therein, in the great supportment of a sin-perplexed soul. *Ps.* cxxx. 4.

318 God by affliction brings a kind of death unto the world, and the pleasures of it,

upon the desires and affections of the soul, which renders them unserviceable unto the remainder of defiling lusts and corruptions. This in some indeed endures but for a season, as when in sickness, wants, fears, distresses, losses, sorrows; there is a great appearance of mortification, when yet the strength of sin and the vigor of carnal affections do speedily revive upon the least appearance of relief. But with believers it is not so; but by all their chastisements they are really more and more delivered from the pollutions of sin, and made partakers of God's holiness. God doth by them excite, stir up, and draw forth all the graces of the Spirit into a constant, diligent, and vigorous exercise; and therein the work of cleansing the soul from the pollution of sin is carried on. A time of affliction is the especial season for the peculiar exercise of all grace; for the soul can then no otherwise support or believe itself: for it is cut short or taken off from all other comforts or reliefs, every sweet thing being made bitter unto it. It must therefore live not only by faith and love and delight in God, but in some sense upon them: for if in their exercise, support and comfort be not obtained, we can have none. Therefore doth such a soul find it necessary to be constantly abounding in the exercise of grace, that it may in any measure be able to support itself under its troubles and

sufferings. 1 *Pet.* i. 6, 7. *Jam.* i. 2, 3. *Isa.* xxvii. 9. Dr. Owen.

319 O what rare mercies lie often hid under some dark and afflicting providences, even while they are at our hand, and are not seen, from the forwardness of an embittered spirit, that will not let its own eyes see the advantage of such a case: but, as if they did well to be angry against God, will quarrel more his crossing their humor than observe his tenderness for promoting their real good, and cry against him because he will not undo them! *Gen.* xlii. 36. xlv. 5. 8. Mr. Fleming.

320 It becomes a saint to believe the faithfulness of God to him, according to his covenant, under all afflictions and chastisements. Grace will act like itself at last; and they that trust in the Lord shall never be ashamed. Though God veil his grace, and give us mercies on the point of his sword, yet, when we pass through the fire and the water, he will be with us: but they need good eyes to see the love of God when they are compassed with fire and water; yet it is there: and a gracious soul hath some discerning of his promise in the midst of them, You shall not perish, because I will be with you. So how boldly may a saint enter into these fires, and walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil! God cannot hide his face, his love, from such a faith. A tried faith, that will not let God

go, nor entertain an unbelieving thought of him, is a precious faith. God will certainly turn back on such a soul, and manifest his love at last in a glorious manner. *Ps.* xxiii. 4. xxvii. 1, 3. cxix. 75. *Isa.* xliii. 2.

321 Afflictions are very overwhelming sometimes, and would indeed quite sink us, if the word of God did not speak comfort to us in and under them. It is a sign of a spiritual frame, when, in the midst of troubles and afflictions, we can find present delight in the word of God: but when afflictions come, and the word administers no comfort, it is a sign we are in a dead, unbelieving frame, and no way affected with the report the gospel makes of future happiness *Ps.* cxix. 92.

322 Sin hath a life, and that such a life as whereby it not only lives, but rules and reigns in all who are not born of God. By the entrance of grace into the soul it loseth its dominion, but not its being; its rule, but not its life. The utter ruin, destruction, and gradual annihilation of all the remainders of this cursed life of sin is our design and aim in this duty, which is therefore called mortification. The design of this duty, wherever it is in sincerity, is to leave sin neither operation, life, nor being. And this concerns us in all that we are and do: in our duties, in our callings, in our conversation with others, in our retirements, in the frames of our spirits, in our straits, in

our mercies, in the use of our enjoyments, in our temptations. If we are negligent unto any occasion, we shall suffer by it. This is our enemy, and this is the war we are engaged in; every mistake, every neglect, is perilous. *Rom.* viii. 6—13.

Dr. Owen.

323 Sorrow for sin and repentance are by no means to be looked on as separate from the blood and redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ, but as flowing from it, and ordained by God in the hands of the Mediator, who truly gives it, washes it in his own blood, and as the great high-priest offers it with the incense, ointment, and rich perfumes of his own holiness, righteousness, and purity. He promotes, advances, and gives grace, and is continually renewing it. *Rev.* viii. 3, 4. How adorable is that grace of God in Jesus Christ, which hath not only given us the doctrine of repentance, but by his spirit gives the very grace itself! He puts no trust in our own powers of understanding, will, affections natural conscience, reason, or morality; but only in his own Spirit and grace in his Son. Nor doth he accept our repentance upon its worth, value, and perfection; but wraps it up in the rich robes of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so it is pleasing in his sight. So he does not lessen or derogate from the graciousness of his gospel in imposing such a duty, but he magnifies it by giving so high

and admirable a grace and divine power within us. *Ps.* lxxx. 3. *Job.* xv. 15. *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19.

324 Humility, how acceptable is it to God! how yielding to his command! God gives grace to it. God looks off from heaven and earth to look to that man who is of a contrite spirit, and trembles at his word. He that is the high and lofty One, who dwells in the high and holy place, and inhabits eternity, will dwell also with the humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, *Isa.* lvii. 15. This sorrow hides pride from man, and so fits it to all holy returns to God by repentance. It withdraws man from his purpose: it changes the purpose of man. That which was the full purpose of the heart before was to cleave to sin and the world; now the heart cleaves to God with its full purpose. This humble broken spirit is the sacrifice of God, the sacrifice He will not despise, because it is ready to yield up itself in all obedience to Him. But the sorrow of the world, not eying God, nor having regard to Him, never changes the heart nor life into obedience unto Him, and so leaves a man in the same lost undone state, and so becomes desperate sorrow and anguish, as the scripture calls it, *Isa.* viii. 22. and may be most fitly described by *Jer.* vi. 28, 29, 30. "They are all grievous revolters; they are brass and iron; they are all corrupters; the bellows are

burnt, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain; for the evil of the heart is not pulled away: reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them." When the Lord therefore, as the great Founder, casteth men as into the furnace of sorrow, and they are not purged from evil, the melting is in vain, and they are therefore rejected of God as reprobate silver. When sorrow and affliction, which are as the chirurgery or blood-letting of the gracious hand of God, effect nothing of good, it is as the corruption of the whole mass of blood, and is certainly unto death. *Isa.* l. 11. lxv. 14. *Lam.* iii. 65.

325 In true repentance the soul makes full and firm resolutions of new obedience and amendment of life, and such as are ready to issue out into action, and this thro' the grace, power, and assistance of the divine Spirit. *Luke* xix. 8. *Job* xxxiv. 31, 32. Mr. Beverly.

326 No man can turn to God except he be first turned of God; and after he is turned he repents: so Ephraim saith, After I was converted I repented, *Jer.* xxxi. 19. The truth is, A repentant sinner first believes that God will do that which he promiseth, namely, pardon his sins and take away his iniquity; then he resteth on the hope of it, and from that and for it he leaves sin, and will forsake his old course, because it is displeasing unto God, and will do that which

is pleasing and acceptable to him. So that first of all God's favor is apprehended, and remission of sins believed; then, upon that, cometh alteration of life and conversation. *Luke* xix. 8. *Rom.* vi. 21.

MARR. MOD. DIVIN.

327 There is a most excellent suitableness and congruity betwixt repentance and remission of sins, without prejudice to the freedom of God's grace, since God gives repentance as well as requires it, and makes his people what he would have them to be. *Acts* iii. 19. *Ezek.* xvi. 60 to 63. xxxvi. 26.

Mr. FLEMING.

328 The principal and adequate reason of all divine worship, and that which makes it such, is what God is in himself. Because he is, viz. an infinitely glorious, good, wise, holy, powerful, righteous, self-subsisting, self-sufficient all-sufficient Being, the fountain, cause, and author of life and being to all things, and of all that is good in every kind; the first cause, last end, and absolutely sovereign Lord of all, the rest and all-satisfactory reward of all other beings; therefore is he by us to be adored and worshipped with divine and religious worship: hence are we in our hearts, minds, and souls, to admire, adore, and love him; his praises are we to celebrate, him to trust and fear, and so to resign ourselves and all our concernments unto his will and disposal; to regard him with all the acts of our wills

and persons, answerably to the holy properties of his nature. This it is to glorify him as God. *Ps.* cxiii. cxlv. cxlvii. *Rev.* iv. 11. v. 13. xv. 3, 4. Dr. Owen.

329 This seems to be little considered in such enquiries some have about their inward state, and whether they believe or not, how it is much greater to believe the truth in general than any personal application thereof can be in their case; for which the apostle clearly reasons in *Rom.* viii. 32. He that spared not his own Son, how will he not with him give us all things? For if we be assured of that in which the greatest difficulty of faith lies, must it not by clear consequence follow, that what concerns our interest is but as straining at a gnat, when such a thing is once swallowed: and where a Chirstian hath got this length, to believe the testimony of God is such whereon with greatest security he can repose his soul, personal evidences cannot then stay behind, if there be a serious endeavor in their essays after holiness. For the greater wonder here is to believe the truth of the gospel, that he is able to save to the utmost all who come unto him, more than his saving me: and it may be too obvious, that the cause whence the last is obstructed, is, so small an establishment in the first. 1 *Tim.* i. 15. *Isa.* liii. 1. *Ps.* cxvi. 10. *John* vi. 69. Mr. Fleming.

330 The going forth of the soul by faith unto Christ as the Anointed of the Lord,

sent and sealed by the Father to undertake the great work of man's redemption, is a sure evidence of regeneration. *Matth.* xvi. 17. Mr. Tho. Cole.

331 They are few who find it a great business to be eternally saved, and have their souls kept under such a weight; to whom the thoughts of a heaven or hell are brought near as undoubted realities, betwixt which there is no middle state after death; but know they must be inhabitants of one or the other. For if such a deep impression as this were on men's souls, could they possibly be so unconcerned in their being sure of the foundation whereon they have so great a venture? Such indeed are a rare sight in this age, whose working out their salvation is with fear and trembling. And most seem so far to be lost in a throng of other things, that this greatest question which can occur in all their life [if they be born again] is laid aside till they are ready to die. O! hath our light thus put us out of seriousness, and giving all diligence, which is so indispensably required of those who mind heaven? Will gifts and an high repute in the church, or a fair shew in the flesh, be a sure evidence to cause rejoicing when once it comes to die? This is a sad subject; and I must say, if the characters of godliness the scripture hath laid down were seriously pondered, there never was an age wherein more professors are like to come short of heaven,

and be found in a fundamental delusion about their state, than this is. *Eccl.* xi. 3. *Mark* viii. 36. Mr. Fleming.

332 There is a profession of a special kind, which in its own nature is exposed to reproach in the world: they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, 2 *Tim.* iii. 12. There is a being in Christ by profession, and not living godly; for there are branches in the vine by profession that bring forth no fruit; men that have a profession whereby they do not trouble the world, and for which the world will not trouble them; that can go that length in compliance with the world and the ways of it, as that they shall not have one drop of the Spirit of the witness of Christ, which torments the men of the earth. But they that will live godly, that is, engage in a profession that shall on all occasions and in all instances manifest the power of it, they shall suffer persecution. We see many every day keep up a profession, but such a professon as will not provoke the world. Now this is to be ashamed of the gospel, to be ashamed of the power and glory of it, to be ashamed of the author of it. No man can put Jesus Christ to greater shame than by professing the gospel without shewing the power of it, *Phil.* iii. 18. *Rev.* xi. 10. There can be no more vile and sordid hypocrisy, than for any to pretend unto inward habitual sanctification, while their

lives are barren in the fruits of righteousness and obedience. *Tit.* i. 16. *Matth.* xxiii. 14. Dr. Owen.

333 Of all dangers in profession, let professors take heed of this, namely, of a customary, traditional, or doctrinal owning such truths as ought to have their accomplishment in themselves, while they have no experience of the reality and efficacy of them. This is plainly to have a form of godliness, and to deny the power of it. And of this sort of men do we often see many turning atheists, scoffers, and open apostates. Hence it is that the knowledge and profession of the truth with many is so fruitless, inefficacious, and useless. It is not known, it is not understood, nor believed, in its relation unto Christ, on which account alone it conveys either life or power unto the soul. Men profess they know the truth, but they know it not in its proper order, harmony, and use: it leads them not unto Christ, it brings not Christ unto them, and so is lifeless and useless. Hence often none are more estranged from the life of God than such who have much notional knowledge of the doctrines of the scripture: for they are all of them useless, and subject to be abused, if they are not improved to form Christ in the soul, and transform the whole person into his likeness and image. This they will not effect, where their relation unto him is not understood; where they

are not received and learned as a revelation of him, with the mystery of the wisdom and will of God in him. For whereas he is our life, and in our living unto God we do not so much live as he liveth in us, and the life we lead in the flesh is by the faith of him; so that we have neither principle nor power of spiritual life, but in, by, and from him; whatever knowledge we have of the truth, if it do not effect an union between him and our souls, it will be lifeless in us, and unprofitable to us. It is learning the truth as it is in Jesus, which alone reneweth the image of God in us, *Eph.* iv. 21, 22, 23, 24. Where it is otherwise, where men have notions of evangelical truths, but know not Christ in them, whatever they profess, when they come really to examine themselves, they will find them of no use unto them, but that all things between God and their souls are stated on natural light and common presumptions. *Acts* viii. 21. *Tit.* i. 16. Dr. Owen.

334 Acts flowing from a living principle within do carry their own evidence along with them, giving a pleasing sensation of their truth and reality, as the genuine offspring of the heart, which nothing that is forced or counterfeit can do. *Rom.* viii. 16. 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. Mr. Tho. Cole.

335 To believe in Christ for redemption, for justification, for sanctification, is but one half of the duty of faith. It respects Christ

only as He died and suffered for us, as He made atonement for our sins, peace with God and reconciliation for us, as his righteousness is imputed to us unto justification. Unto these ends He is indeed firstly and principally proposed unto us in the gospel; and with respect unto them we are exhorted to receive Him and to believe in Him. But this is not all that is required of us. Christ in the gospel is proposed unto us as our pattern and example of holiness. And as it is a cursed imagination that this was the whole end of his life and death, namely, to exemplify and confirm the doctrine of holiness which He preached; so to neglect his being our example, in considering Him by faith unto that end, and laboring after conformity to Him, is evil and pernicious. Wherefore let us be much in contemplation of what He was, what He did, how in all instances of duties and trials He carried himself until an image or idea of his perfect holiness is implanted in our minds, and we are made like unto Him thereby. 1 *Pet.* ii. 21. 1 *John* iv. 11. *Heb.* xii. 3. *John* xiii. 14.

Dr. Owen.

336 Believers are righteous men; and it is their justice to be glad, and triumph in their victory over death. Justice withholds not what is due, when it is in the power of its hand to pay; to repay vengeance to evil-doers, and praise to them that do well. Death and its accomplices, the law, sin,

Satan, and hell, are enemies that have tragically used believers, made them to bear God knows what, shamed them, and tempted them to curse the day of their birth, held them subject to bondage through fear all the time they lay under their power. An holy revenge is now owing to sin and to Satan; and now that through Christ they are taken out of those cruel hands, they are able to pay it; able to expose them and to put them to open shame; to shew abroad how they themselves have been used by one mightier than they; how the law, as damning, is abolished; sin is condemned, Satan's head is bruised, death is plagued, the grave is destroyed, and hell hath its mouth stopped. *Hos.* xiii. 14. *Rom.* vi. 6. vii. 4, 24, 25. viii. 3. 1 *Cor.* xv. 54, 57.

Mr. Dan. Burgess.

337 That submission to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, in the disposal of all our concerns in this world, is an excellent fruit of faith, an eminent part of holiness, or duty of obedience, is acknowledged. And he that cannot live in an actual resignation of himself and all his concerns unto the sovereign pleasure of God, can neither glorify him in any thing, nor have one hour's solid peace in his own mind. This the uncertainty of all things here below calls for. None knows how soon it may be his portion to be brought into the utmost extremity of earthly calamities. There

is none so old, none so young, none so wise, none so rich, as thence to expect relief from such things. Where then shall we cast anchor in this condition? whither shall we betake ourselves for quiet and repose? It is no where to be obtained but in a resignation of ourselves and all our concernments into the sovereign pleasure of God. And what greater motive can we have hereunto than this? The first act of divine sovereign pleasure concerning us was the choosing us from all eternity unto holiness and happiness. This was done when we were not, when we had no contrivances of our own: and shall we not now put all our temporary concerns into the same hand! Can the same fountain send forth sweet water and bitter? Can the same sovereign pleasure of God be the free only cause of all our blessedness, and can it do that which is really evil unto us? Our souls, our persons, were secure and blessedly provided for, as to grace and glory, in the sovereign will of God. And what a prodigious impiety is it, not to trust all other things in the same hand, to be disposed of freely and absolutely! If we will not forego our interest in mere, absolute, free, sovereign grace for ten thousand worlds, as no believer will; how ready should we be to resign up thereunto that little portion which we have in this world among perishing things! *Job* i. 21. *Ps.* xxxvii. 3, 4, 5. *Rom.* viii. 32. Dr. Owen.

338 It is now many years since the apostate angels made a question whether their will or the will of their Creator should be done: and since that time froward man hath always in that same suit compeered to plead with them against God in daily repining against his will. But the Lord, being both Party and Judge, hath obtained a decree, and saith, *Isa.* xlvi. 10, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. It is then best for us, in the obedience of faith and in an holy submission, to give that to God which the law of his almighty and just power will have of us. *Ps.* xxxiii. 11. *Rom.* ix. 20. Mr. RUTHERFOORD.

339 What doth the frequent discouragement and uncomfortable walk of the people of God speak forth? Doth it not witness how little they are in earnest with this great truth of the scripture's accomplishment, or their little establishment therein? What meaneth these distrustful fears and perplexed complaints, if their eyes be but opened to know they have such a well as the promise of God at their hand? How is it that the smallest straits are so puzzling and ready to outwit them, that they so usually stumble at the cross? And as things from without do appear, the encouragement made to ebb and flow? Is not here the cause, that they stagger at the promise, while probabilities in some visible way do not go along for its performance? It is truly easy to have some

sweet notions of faith at a distance ; but when the trial comes near, upon such a close approach, that there is no other way than to put the whole stress of their particular interest on the word, and on that alone, many are then at a stand, because they are not thoroughly assured, that, though the earth should be overturned, there is an absolute necessity for the promise of God to take place. *Ps.* xlvi. 2, 3. *Isa.* liv. 10, 11. lv. 11.

340 The fulfilling that promise for direction which God hath given his people in the word, that he will guide them with his counsel, will order and direct their steps who do commit their way to him, and teach them the way they shall choose, hath been so manifest to those who have ever made earnest of acknowledging God in their ways, and committing the conduct thereof to him ; that I shall but attest their experience, if they have not this testimony to give, that to trust God with their case, and give him the guiding of their way, hath taken them much more easily through a plunging case than over-caring anxiety : yea, the Lord's directing their steps, and making things successful when they have committed the same to him, hath been often as sensible to them as their strait and difficulty was, 2 *Chron.* xx. 12, 24. Their experience can also witness how over-caring anxiety hath often caused things to thrive worse under their

care ; while they never found a more satisfying issue in a particular than by a quiet, submissive dependance upon the Lord for the same. *Prov.* xxix. 25. *Ps.* xxv. 9, 14. xxxiv. 22. xxxvii. 5. lxxiii. 24.

Mr. FLEMING.

341 He that looks not for much from the creature can never be much deceived. He that looks for much from God shall be sure to have his desire answered and satisfied ; he shall never fall short of his expectation. 1 *Pet.* i. 24. 1 *Cor.* vii. 29, 30, 31. *Ps.* cxxv. 1. *Jer.* xvii. 5, 7. Dr. PRESTON.

342 Since it is sure and undeniable that this earth doth hang in an empty place, though men see not whereon it leans and rests, O what a strange thing is it ! could the air bear up so vast and ponderous a body ? But herein is a marvellous divine power convincingly witnessed, which hath so established it, that it cannot be moved. Now is it not this very word that bears up such a weight ? And thence with as clear ground we may reason for adventuring the church, with its weight, and every Christian's burden, whatever it may be, on the promise of this God, on whose word the great bulk of the earth doth this day lean ? I must say, no mathematical demonstration does follow by a clearer evidence, than this consequence from such premises undeniable. *Isa.* xlviii. 13. *Job* xxvi. 7. 1 *Pet.* v. 7.

343 How few, among the throng of professed protestants, know what it is to have the Bible for the security of the protestant interest, and thus quiet their souls, though all the foundations seem to shake, because they know the cause is certainly God's, and he is faithful who hath promised. *Isa.* li. 7, 8, &c. liv. 17. Mr. FLEMING.

344 Whatever notional knowledge men may have of divine truths, as they are doctrinally proposed in the scripture, yet, if they know them not in their respect unto the person of Christ, as the foundation of the counsels of God; if they discern not how they proceed from him and centre in him, they will bring no saving, spiritual light unto their understandings. For all spiritual life and light is in him and from him alone. *John* i. 4, 8, 12. ix. 5.

345 The difference between believers and unbelievers, as to knowledge, is not so much in the matter of their knowledge as in the manner of knowing. Unbelievers, some of them, may know more and be able to say more of God, his perfections and will, than many believers; but they know nothing as they ought, nothing in a right manner, nothing spiritually and savingly, nothing with a holy, heavenly light. The excellency of a believer is not that he hath large apprehensions of things, but that what he doth apprehend (which may perhaps be very little) he sees it in the light of the Spirit of God, in a

saving, soul-transforming light. And this is that which gives us communion with God, and not prying thoughts, or curious raised notions. *Ps.* ix. 10.

346 No man can set his affections on things here below who hath any regard to the pattern of Christ, or is in any measure influenced with the power and efficacy of his cross. My love is crucified, said an holy martyr of old. He whom his soul loved was so, and in Him his love to all things here below. Do you therefore find your affections ready to be engaged unto or too much entangled with the things of this world; are your desires of increasing them, your hopes of keeping them, your fears of losing them, your love unto them, your delight in them, operative in your minds, possessing your thoughts, and influencing your conversation? Turn aside a little, and by faith contemplate the life and death of the Son of God: a blessed glass will it be, where you may see what contemptible things they are which you perplex yourselves about. O that any of us should love or esteem the things of this world, the power, riches, goods or reputation of it, who have had a spiritual view of them in the cross of Christ! *Gal.* v. 24. vi. 14. *Col.* iii. 1.

Dr. Owen.

347 Outward things did never yield less than when we press them most; and when we are eager in the pursuit of the world,

and satisfaction there, our spirits are hurried with many perturbations: so that we must say, That which keepeth from enjoying God doth also hinder the comfortable enjoyment of ourselves. 1 *Tim.* vi. 9, 10, 11. Mr. Fleming.

348 It is a thing to be lamented, that a christian, born for heaven, having the prize of his high calling set before him, and matters of that weight and excellency to exercise his heart upon, should be taken up with trifles, and fill both his head and heart with vanity and nothing, as all earthly things will prove ere long. Yet, if many men's thoughts and discourses were distilled, they are so frothy, that they would hardly yield one drop of true comfort. *Isa.* lv. 2. 2 *Cor.* iv. 18. *Col.* iii. 1, 2, 3. Dr. Sibs.

349 The more we cast the thoughts and love of the world out of our hearts the fairer we lie for communications of light and knowledge from heaven, which God has promised to strangers upon the earth; but, if a man will be always muddling in the world, it is just with God to hide his commandments from him. A saint never carries it more like a saint than when he carrieth it most like a stranger in this world. *Ps.* cxix. 19. *Heb.* xi. 13.

Mr. Tho. Cole.

350 As Abraham dealt by his concubine's children, so doth God by the Ishmaels of the world; He gives them portions and sends

them away ; but the inheritance He reserves for his Isaacs : to them He gives all that He hath, yea, even Himself : and what can we have more ? *Gen.* xv. 1. *Ps.* xvi. 5. 1 *Cor.* iii. 22, 23. Mr. E. Cole.

351 Hereby many deceive their own souls ; goods, lands, possessions, relations, trades, with secular interest in them, are the things whose image is drawn on their minds, and whose characters are written on their foreheads as the titles whereby they may be known. As belivers, beholding the glory of Christ in the blessed image of the gospel, are changed into the same image and likeness by the spirit of the Lord ; so these persons, beholding the beauty of the world and the things that are in it in the cursed glass of self-love, are in their minds changed into the same image. Hence perplexing fears, vain hopes, empty embraces of things perishing, fruitless desires, earthly, carnal designs, cursed self-pleasing imaginations, feeding on and being fed by the love of the world and self do abide and prevail in them. *Eph.* iv. 17, 18, 19, 20. *Rom.* viii. 6. But we have not so learned Christ.

352 Unless we can arrive unto a fixed judgment that all things here below are transitory and perishing, reaching only to the outward man, the body ; that the best of them have nothing that is truly substantial or abiding in them ; that there are other things, wherein we have an assured interest,

that are incomparably better than they and above them; it is impossible but we must spend our lives in fears, sorrows, and distractions. 2 *Cor.* iv. 18. *Col.* iii. 1, 2, 5.

Dr. Owen.

353 Let a man but deal plainly with his own heart, and he shall find that, notwithstanding he hath many things, yet there is ever one thing wanting; for indeed man's soul cannot be satisfied with any creature, no, nor with a world of creatures. And the reason is, because the desires of man's soul are infinite, according to that infinite goodness it once lost in losing God; yea, man's soul is a spirit, and therefore cannot communicate with any corporal thing; so that all creatures not being that infinite fulness which our souls have lost, and towards which they do still re-aspire, they cannot give it full contentment. *Eccl.* i. 7, 8. *Ps.* lxxiii. 25.

Marr. Mod. Divin.

354 All that God hath, both Himself and the creatures, He is dealing and parting among the sons of Adam: there are none so poor, as that they can say in his face, He hath given them nothing: but there is no small odds betwixt the gifts given to lawful bairns and to bastards. *Ps.* cxlv. 15, 16. cxlvi. 8, 9.

355 Fie, fie upon this condemned and foolish world, that will give so little for Christ and salvation. O if there were but a free market proclaimed of Christ and salvation

in that day when the trumpet of God shall awaken the dead, how many buyers would be there! God send me no more happiness but that which the blind world (to their eternal woe) letteth slip through their fingers! *Prov.* i. 24 to 31.

Mr. RUTHERFOORD.

356 Faith makes the believer inherit substance, and look to things that are real; while the rest of the unbelieving world weary themselves in chasing shadows, and feed their deluded eyes with the sight of vain imaginations. The more the believer looks at things that are not seen, the more reality doth he observe and find in them: whereas the more he looks at things that are seen, the more vanity and emptiness he finds in them. He looks to things seen, and they mock him; he looks upon them, and they are not; a serious look at them looks them into nothing: but things not seen have in them substance, reality, and solidity, which he with delight beholds. He looks upon things seen, and sees them refuse, loss, and dung: but he sees things that are not seen, to be so excellent, that even those things which seem to have some glory have yet no glory, by reason of this glory which doth excel. He looks at things that are seen, and sees them like a vapor or airy meteor, in a continual motion while they are, and in a little time they quite evanish: but things not seen, he perceives fixed, unchangeable, and

that for ever, 2 *Cor.* iv. 18. Faith has a back look, as well as a fore look; it not only sees those things that are to come in God's revelation of them, but it also in like manner sees those things which have been of old, even from everlasting. And indeed a humbled believer could not believe the reality of any favor tendered unto a vile sinner (such as he knows himself to be) by the holy God, unless he saw it flowing from sovereign grace as the fountain; he could not believe any thing useful unto himself in his present condition, if it were not the product of wonderfully free love, that observes not the desert but the need of those upon whom it bestows its favors. Again, he could not be persuaded to believe that he shall have any unchangeable mercy, while he himself changes so often, and very often to the worse, unless he saw them the product of the free, sovereign, and eternal love of Him who is God, and changes not: and this indeed is the true reason why the sons of Jacob are not consumed. Here is one sweet glass, wherein the believer has indeed a satisfying discovery of the solidity, excellency, and eternal unchangeableness of those things that are not seen, *Jer.* xxxi. 3. Faith looks at things unseen in their procuring cause, the death of the eternal Son of God, who neither by the blood of goats or calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemp-

tion. Here the believer, which hath faith's eyes, sees the reality of things; for surely the blood of God was not shed for nothing; nay, here it sees their glory and excellency. A wise merchant will not give pearls for trifles; far less the only wise God this precious blood for things of no or small value. Here, if any where, the believer may see them, beyond all rational contradiction, real, great, durable, and eternal, *Rom.* ix. 15. *Ezek.* xvi. 5, 6. Faith sees and is satisfied about things not seen, by the view it gets of them, their reality, and their glory, in that well-ordered covenant which is the means of their conveyance. *Isa.* lv. 3. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5.

Mr. HALYBURTON.

357 Every man blameth the devil for his sins; but the great devil, the house-devil of every man, that eateth and lieth in every man's bosom, that idol that killeth all, is himself. O blessed are they that can deny themselves, and put Christ in the room of themselves! O would to the Lord I had not a myself, but Christ; not a my lust, but Christ; not a my ease, but Christ; not a my honor, but Christ! O sweet word! *Gal.* ii. 20, I live no more, but Christ liveth in me! O if every one would put away himself, his own self, his own ease, his own pleasure, his own credit and his own twenty things, his own hundred things, that he setteth up as idols above Christ! *Phil.* iii. 7, 8, 9, 10. 2 *Cor.* iv. 10. RUTHERFOORD.

358 Seeing men cannot get the doctrine of God's justice blotted out of the Bible, yet it is such an eye-sore to them that they strive to blot it out of their minds; and they ruin themselves by presuming on his mercy, while they are not careful to get a righteousness wherein they may stand before his justice; but say in their hearts, The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil. *Zeph.* i. 12. Mr. Boston.

359 No man, without the light of saving faith, can constantly and universally approve of the revelation of the will of God, as unto our holiness and obedience.

360 When men live to themselves, and are satisfied that they do no hurt, though they do no good, are secure, selfish, wrathful, angry, peevish, or have their kindness confined to their relations, or otherwise are but little useful but in what they are prest unto, and therein come off with difficulty in their own minds; who esteem all lost that is done for others, and the greatest part of wisdom to be cautious, and disbelieve the necessities of men; that make self and its concernments the end of their lives; whatever otherwise their profession may be, or their diligence in religious duties, they do very little either represent or glorify God in the world. *Matth.* v. 16. *John* xiii. 35. *Jam.* iii. 17.

361 In nothing more are men subject to mistakes than in the application of things to

themselves, and a judgment of their interest in them. Fear, self-love, with the prevalency of temptations and corruptions, do all engage their powers to darken the light of the mind, and to pervert its judgment. In no case doth the deceitfulness of the heart or of sin more act itself. Hence multitudes say peace to themselves, to whom God doth not say peace; and some who are children of light do yet walk in darkness. *Prov.* xiii. 7. *Isa.* iii. 10. xlviii. 22. Dr. Owen.

362 Mercy in God is drawn out by his will; he pardoneth whom he will: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. The compassion itself doth not work necessarily in God, but it depends on an act of his will. If God had been merciful to no sinner, but had damned all men and angels that had sinned, yet He had been as merciful in his nature as now He is. So that our salvation must be resolved into some other principle than simply his being merciful. For had He not set his heart to love, had not his will been set upon it, not a man that sinned had ever had a drop of mercy from Him, though He is thus full and thus rich in mercy. So that, though God is rich in mercy, yet there must be love as the foundation. That which moved Him to be merciful to any, it was his love pitched upon them, and then, seeing them in misery, love stirs up mercy. His love had first singled out certain persons whom He meant to shew

mercy to, and love did guide the channel which way mercy should run. And therefore you shall find in scripture that election obtains it. Jacob have I loved. And that is the reason why He shews mercy to any, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. Then let the love of God be the greatest thing in your hearts, the nearest thing to your souls of all else. Of all things in God, value his love, and seek after that. God's love is the greatest thing of all : it is more than all his benefits. The love of God is more than all his gifts ; and yet He hath given great things to us, and done great things for us. His love is the first gift, in the gift of which all things else are yours. The gift of his Son, it was a great gift to us ; but it was founded in his love : He so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, *John* iii. 16. Though we, being sinners, need mercy ; that is the next thing we want ; O mercy ! mercy ! because we apprehend ourselves to be in misery : but do you look beyond mercy ; look to love, which is a greater thing to you than mercy. The reason why mercy ran into your hearts, and washed you with the blood of Christ, is because love guided the channel. To seek after mercy, this self-love and the misery thou art in will make thee do. O but there is something else, saith a good soul ; it is the love of God and the favor of God that I would see ; and it is not self-love

will ever carry a man on to seek after that. And what is the reason that this chiefly is the pursuit of a soul spiritualized? One, among others, is this, because grace is always the image of God's heart. Now this being the chief thing in God's heart, and the first and the highest thing, hence therefore the soul seeks that ultimately and chiefly. *John* iii. 16. *Ps.* lxxviii. 68. *Mal.* i. 2, 3. *Gal.* ii. 20. Dr. GOODWIN.

363 The flesh and Christ offer for the will, who shall carry it. Pleasures, profits, riches, honors, are the great things, with liberty and ease from trouble, which flesh doth offer for the will. Yea, saith Christ, but who shall save thee from that wrath that is coming on thee, and which now thou art sensible will befal thee, for being a slave to thy lusts, to the flesh, to the creatures so long? that wrath being infinitely more evil, than is that good which flesh offers thee. I offer thee deliverance from wrath to come. This is fair bidding for the will, that lieth under fears of that wrath, if God cut asunder the thread of life. But if this be only privative, and you must have positive good to fill your hungry appetite; let flesh offer: flesh offers fair promises, and what it doth is more by promises than performances. Christ, who is the yea and amen of all promises, he offers exceeding great and precious promises, and will perform all to a word, as he did to Israel, *Josh.* xxiii. 14. Flesh offers pleas-

ures : Christ offers redemption from fleshly pleasures ; thy soul shall not any more be a slave to them ; I will make thee free indeed ; thou shalt feel what a pleasure it will be to have these chains taken off, and to be above thy lusts ; thou shalt drink of the river of my pleasures, even the pleasures of my love and grace ; stay but a-while with patience, and pleasures for evermore. Flesh bids ease and liberty from trouble : Christ bids peace in conscience, peace in heaven, pardon in bosom, *John* xiv. 27. Flesh bids riches : Christ bids unsearchable riches. Flesh bids the love and favor of great persons : Christ bids the love of the Father and his love ; and, to beat flesh quite out, saith God, I give thee my Self, I give thee my Christ : whatever flesh bids is but temporary ; what I bid is eternal. The soul, being under the work of the Spirit, is enlightened to see and understand these things, and the glory and the good of them ; and thus the Lord carries away the will in triumph ; he hath out bid the flesh. The blessed angels rejoice at this work ; there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. But what hast thou gotten, sweet Saviour, that thou art so pleased in thy victory ? What ! I have gotten thy will. A huge booty, Lord, not worth the taking up, nor worth one thousandth part of what thou hast offered to win it ; thou hast but pulled trouble upon thy Self in getting it : now thou hast a

sinful, wretched, guilty, peevish, froward, polluted wretch to pardon, to cleanse, and to take care of; one that will try thy patience: small reason that thou shouldst triumph in thy winnings. Well, be it so, yet my Father hath the glory of his mercy and grace; I have the glory of my love and redemption, I see of the travel of my soul and am satisfied, *Isa.* liii. 11. To eternity then let thy Father's grace and mercy be adored, thy love and redemption be admired. *Luke* xv. 10. Mr. FIRMIN.

364 These are the tremendous mysteries of our religion, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, *Rom.* xvi. 25, 26. From hence the divinity of Christianity openly appears. What wisdom of men or angels could have been able to conceive of such hidden, such sublime things, at so great a distance from the understanding of all creatures! What adorable wisdom of God, what righteousness, holiness, truth, goodness, and love of mankind, doth here open itself, in finding out, in giving, in perfecting, this means of our salvation! How pleasingly doth conscience, pressed with the burden of its sins, acquiesce in such a surety, in such an engagement! Here at length observing a manner of our reconciliation

worthy of God and secure to man! Who, contemplating these things in the light of the Holy Spirit, would not burst forth into the praise of that most holy, most just, most true, best and greatest Deity! O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! O mysteries which the angels desire to look into! Glory to the Father, who hath raised up, admitted, and given to us such a surety! Glory to the Son, who, clothing himself with our flesh, hath so willingly, so patiently, so constantly, gone through such an engagement for us! Glory to the Holy Spirit, the revealer, witness, and pledge of so great happiness to us! All hail! O Christ Jesus, thou true and eternal God, true and holy man, both at once; the properties of both natures preserved in the unity of thy person! Thee we acknowledge, thee we worship, to thee we betake ourselves, at thy feet we throw ourselves, from thy hand alone we expect salvation: thou the only Saviour, we would be thy particular ones, and are so by thy grace, and forever shall remain so. Let the whole world of thine elect know thee, acknowledge thee, and with us adore thee, and be saved by thee! This is the sum of our faith, our hope, and our prayer. Amen. *Rom.* xi. 33. Mr. Herm. Witsius.

365 Wouldst thou know the love of God? measure it not by any outward thing, by wealth, honor, or outward prosperity; for

this is common with infidels and reprobates, whom the Lord abhorreth. No, there is no outward created comfort can secure us of God's favor; only the having Christ, and receiving him by faith as a gift from the Father: this only is that which is the special pledge of God's favor and love. What is all that the wicked have, the dew of heaven, gladness of heart, sun-shine, *&c?* If they have not the righteousness of Christ to cover them, the life of Christ to quicken them, such things as eye never saw, their condition is woful. *Job* xxvii. 8. *Matth.* xvi. 26.

Mr. Bain.

366 Darkness in the minds of men, ignorance of God, his nature, and his will, was the original of all evil unto the world, and yet continues so to be. For hereon did Satan erect his kingdom and throne, obtaining in his design until he bare himself as the God of this world, and was so esteemed by the most. He exalted himself by virtue of this darkness (as he is the prince of darkness) into the place and room of God, as the object of the religious worship of men. For the things which the gentiles sacrificed they sacrificed unto devils, and not unto God, 1 *Cor.* x. 21. *Ps.* cvi. 37. This is the territory of Satan, yea, the power and sceptre of his kingdom in the minds of the children of disobedience. Hereby he maintains his dominion to this day in many and great nations, and with individual persons

innumerable. This is the spring of all wickedness and confusion among men themselves. Hence arose that flood of abominations in the old world, which God took away with a flood of desolation. Hence were the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, which he revenged with fire from heaven. In brief, all the rage, blood, confusion, desolations, cruelties, oppressions, and villanies, which the world hath been and is filled withal, whereby the souls of men have been and are flooded into eternal destruction, have all arisen from this corrupt fountain of the ignorance of God. *Prov.* i. 24. 31. Dr. Owen.

367 All that antinomianism which the orthodox preachers of free grace are falsely charged with lies here, because they maintain that the first thing a convinced sinner is to eye, in his turning to God, is the free grace and mercy of God in Christ for the pardon of sin. Evangelical conviction leads him to a reliance upon Christ in some degree of saving faith for the pardon of all his sins, and this faith begets in him a secret hope of pardon, and is the spring of all after-sanctification, *viz.* of mortification of sin, of repentance, and of all new obedience. Let this be remembered, as the main thing we contend about, that we begin our religion at the grace of God, and do not think to ground our faith in Christ upon any legal preparations or works of our own. *Tit.* iii. 5, 6. Mr. Tho. Cole.

368 The doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience, that was invented against antinomianism, may well be ranked among the worst antinomian errors. For my part I hate it with perfect hatred, and count it mine enemy, as I have found it to be: and I have found, by some good experience, the truth of the lesson taught by the apostle, that the way to be freed from the mastery and dominion of sin is not to be under the law, but under grace, *Rom.* vi. 15. 2 *Cor.* v. 14. Mr. MARSHAL.

369 If the goodness of God is so admirably seen in the works of nature and the favors of providence, with what a noble superiority does it even triumph in the mystery of redemption! Redemption is the brightest mirror in which to contemplate this most lovely attribute of the Deity. Other gifts are only as mites from the divine treasury; but redemption opens, I had almost said exhausts, all the stores of his glorious grace. Herein God commendeth his love; not only manifests, but renders it perfectly marvellous; manifests it in so stupendous a manner, that it is beyond parallel, beyond thought, and above all blessing and praise. *Ps.* cvii. 2. cxi. 9. cxiii. 7, 8. cxxxix. 17. *Rom.* v. 8. *Eph.* iii. 19. Mr. HERVEY.

370 Grace is so free, that the mercy we abuse, the Name we have prophaned, the Name of which we have deserved wrath,

opens its mouth with pleas for us, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 21. His name, while it pleads for them, mentions their demerits, that grace might appear to be grace indeed, and triumph in its own sweetness. *Rom.* v. 20. *Eph.* ii. 4, 5. Mr. CHARNOCK.

371 The righteousness of Christ imputed to a believer frees him from the obligation of yielding obedience to be his justifying righteousness, but adds an infinite obligation to obedience in point of gratitude; purchases and procures grace for enabling to obey to all the other ends thereof, expiates the imperfection of his personal obedience, and renders its sincerity acceptable. 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. Mr. GLASCOCK.

372 I have nothing to do with the devil, neither hath he given me any disturbance all the time of my sickness. But, be it so, let him come, let him attack me, and try his strength upon me a poor miserable sinner; I will not therefore despond in my mind; for I know that I have not sinned against him, but against my God: wherefore, following the example of the Israelites in the wilderness, I will shew to him not the brazen serpent indeed, but the Son of God hanging upon the cross; and I will say, it is against this Person I have sinned, and not against thee; to Him I wholly commit myself, for I believe He hath paid a sufficient price to God the Father for my sins. Wherefore be gone, O devil, and turn thy darts against

the Seed of the woman: if you overcome Him, you overcome me also. *Ps.* lxviii. 18. *Phil.* ii. 8, 9. *Heb.* ii. 14.

Mr. Solomon Gesner.

373 Here is the grave, the wrath of God, and devouring flames, the just punishment of sin, on the one side; and here am I, a poor sinful soul, on the other side: but this is my comfort, the covenant of grace, which is established upon so many sure promises, hath salved all. There is an act of oblivion passed in heaven: I will forgive their iniquities, and their sins will I remember no more. This is the blessed privilege of all within the covenant, among whom I am one. 1 *Cor.* xv. 55, 56, 57.

Mr. William Lyford.

374 O it is sweet at all times, especially at such a time, to see the reconciled face of God through Jesus Christ, and hear the voice of peace through the blood of the cross. 2 *Tim.* i. 12. Mr. Flavel.

375 O Lord God, I thank Thee that Thou wouldst have me to be poor and a beggar upon the earth: I have no house, land, possession, or money, to leave. Thou hast given me a wife and children: to Thee I return them: nourish, teach, and save them, as hitherto thou hast me, O Father of the fatherless, and Judge of the widows! O my heavenly Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of all consolations, I thank thee that thou hast

revealed thy Son Jesus Christ to me, on whom I have believed, whom I have professed, whom I have loved, whom I have celebrated; whom the bishop of Rome and all the multitude of the wicked do persecute and reproach. I pray thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, receive my soul. My heavenly Father, although I am taken out of this life, though I must now lay down this body, yet I certainly know that I shall dwell with thee forever, neither can I by any be plucked out of thine hands. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John* iii. 16. x. 28. 2 *Tim.* iv. 6, 7, 8.

MARTIN LUTHER'S last will and prayer. Ex Melch. Adam.

376 I have more than a thousand times vowed to God that I would mend; but I never performed what I promised: for the future I will vow no more, because I have learned by experience that I cannot perform. And unless God be propitious to me for Christ's sake, and grant me a happy hour when I shall depart this life, I shall never be able to stand with my vows and good works. *Tit.* iii. 5, 6. JOHANNES STAUPICIUS, a German.

377 There is but one sun that giveth light unto the world; there is but one righteousness, there is but one communion of saints. If I were the excellentest creature

in the world, if I were as righteous as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (for they were excellent men in the world) yet we must all confess that we are great sinners, and that there is no salvation but in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and we have all need of the grace of God. And for my part, as concerning death, I feel such joy of Spirit, that, if I should have the sentence of life on one side, and the sentence of death on the other side, I had rather choose a thousand times (seeing God hath appointed the separation) the sentence of death than the sentence of life. *Phil.* i. 23.

Mr. EDWARD DEERING on his death-bed. 1576.

The Law is good, if a man use it lawfully. 1 *Tim.* i. 8, *&c.*

THE law is handled lawfully when it is set forth as a transcript of the holiness, truth, justice, and immutability of God.

When it is set forth in the hand of Justice, accompanied with God's glittering sword, in all its spiritual meaning, and with all its unbounded demands, and against every sinner that is out of Christ Jesus, whether professor or profane.

When it is preached as a revelation of the righteous judgments of God, a revelation of his just wrath and holy indignation against all sin, and sinners who are under the law, for they are under the curse ; and

whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them.

It is handled lawfully when its spiritual meaning is enforced, as reaching to the thoughts, words, acts, and workings of the very souls of men ; *working death in them by itself, which is good.*

It is handled lawfully when the eternity of it is insisted on ; *so* that devils and damned souls shall have a gaol-delivery when God shall cease to exist ; when his eternal sentence shall be recalled, and an everlasting law be repealed—but not till then.

It is lawfully handled when it is set forth as added because of transgression ; that sin by the law might appear sin and become exceeding sinful ; that the offence might abound, being viewed in that perfect glass ; that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world be brought in *guilty* before God.

It is handled lawfully when it is set forth as magnified and made honorable by the Saviour ; who gave a perfect obedience to every precept of it in his life ; and was obedient to his Father in submitting to the sentence of it in death, even the death of the cross.

When it is set forth in the heart of Christ, who is our mercy-seat ; and kept there, as the two tables of it were in the ark of old, never more to arrest them who put their

trust under the shadow of Christ Jesus, who is the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe.

Again, It is lawfully handled when it is proved that the end of the commandment is charity; that love is the fulfilling of the law; and that all those who have *laid hold on eternal life*, in whose heart the love of God is shed abroad, and to whose faith the righteousness of Christ is imputed, *that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

"TIMOTHY—As I besought thee to "abide still at Ephesus, when I went into "Macedonia, that thou mightest *charge* "*some that they teach no other doctrine; "neither give heed to fables, and endless gen-"ealogies, which minister questions rather "than godly edifying which is in faith, so do.* "Now the end of the commandment is char-"ity, out of a pure heart, and of a good "conscience, and of faith unfeigned: *from "which some having swerved*, [or *not aimed "at*] have turned aside unto vain jangling; "*desiring to be teachers of the law*, under-"standing neither what they say nor where-"of they affirm. *But we know that the law "is good, if a man use it lawfully.* Know-"ing this, that the law is not made for a "righteous man, but for the lawless and "disobedient." 1 Tim. Chap. i.

The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and

of faith unfeigned. He who is blessed with this mystery, holds it fast, enjoys it, and preaches it; *is the real saint and true servant of Christ;* and such a servant is to charge suspected persons, that they preach no other doctrine; and they who swerve, or aim not at this, are those that turn a side to vain jangling; novices, who *desire to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.*

God's laws, which are his new covenant, are written in the believer's heart by the Spirit of the living God, which makes him a *living epistle*, not a dead formalist. It is a *fountain of life*, not a killing letter; and it makes him fruitful to God, not barren in the knowledge of him. The law, magnified and made honorable, is in the heart of Christ; and it is the law of the Spirit of life in him that makes the saint free; and he is under that law to Christ, whose WORD is life. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my* WORDS, *hath one that judgeth him: the* WORD *that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*—For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a COMMANDMENT, what I should say, and what I should speak; *and I know that his* COMMANDMENT *is life everlasting*, John xii. 48—50. He that hath my COMMANDMENTS, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. If a man love me, he will keep my WORDS, and my Father

will love him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my SAYING, *he shall never see death*, John viii. 51. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my SAYINGS, John xiv. 24. This is the law of the Spirit of life, that the believer is under. 2 *Cor.* iii. 6 to 13.

MARTIN LUTHER'S *Sentiments on Predestination and Grace.*

ERASMUS had attacked Luther on the doctrines of predestination and grace; and, according to the cant of modern objectors, he urged, "What can be more useless, than to publish this paradox to the world, namely, That whatever we do, is done not by *virtue of our own free-will*, but *in a way of necessity*, &c.? What a wide gap does the publication of this tenet open among men, for the commission of all ungodliness? What wicked person will reform his life? Who will dare to believe himself a favorite of Heaven? Who will fight against his own corrupt inclinations? Therefore, where is either the need or the utility of spreading these notions, from whence so many evils seem to flow?"

To this Luther triumphantly replies—"If, my Erasmus, you consider these paradoxes (as you term them) to be no more than the inventions of men, why are you so extraordinarily heated on the occasion? In that case, your arguments affect not *me*; for there is no person now living in the world

who is a more avowed enemy to the doctrines of men than myself. But, if you believe the doctrines in debate between us to be (as indeed they are) the doctrines of God; you must have bid adieu to all sense of shame and decency thus to oppose them. I will not ask, whither is the *modesty* of Erasmus fled? but, which is much more important, where, alas! are your fear and reverence of the Deity, when you roundly declare, that this branch of truth, which he has revealed from heaven, is at best *useless*, and unnecessary to be known? What, shall the glorious Creator be taught by you his creature, what is fit to be preached, and what to be suppressed? Is the adorable God so very defective in wisdom, and prudence, as not to know, till you instruct him, what would be *useful* and what pernicious? Or could not *he*, whose understanding is infinite, foresee, previous to his revelation of this doctrine, what would be the consequences of his revealing it, till those consequences were pointed out by *you*? You cannot, you dare not, say this. If then it was the divine pleasure to make known these things in his word, and to bid his messengers publish them abroad, and to leave the consequences of their so doing to the wisdom and providence of him in whose name they speak, and whose messages they declare; who art thou, O Erasmus, that thou shouldst reply against God, and say to

the Almighty, what doest thou? St. Paul, discoursing of God, declared peremptorily, *Whom he will he hardeneth:* and again, *God willing to shew his wrath*, &c. And the apostle did not write this to have it stifled among a few persons, and buried in a corner; but wrote it to the Christians at Rome: which was, in effect, bringing this doctrine upon the stage of the whole world; stamping an universal *imprimatur* upon it; and publishing it to believers at large throughout the earth. What can sound harsher in the uncircumcised ears of carnal men, than these words of Christ, *Many are called, but few are chosen;* and elsewhere, *I know whom I have chosen?* Now these and similar assertions of Christ and his apostles, are the very positions which you, O Erasmus, brand as useless and hurtful. You object, if these things are so, who will amend his life? I answer, without the Holy Ghost no man *can* amend his life to purpose. Reformation is but varnished hypocrisy, unless it proceed from grace. The elect and truly pious are amended by the Spirit of God; and those of mankind, who are not amended by *him*, will perish. You ask, moreover, who will dare to believe himself a favorite of Heaven? I answer, it is not in a man's own power to believe himself such, upon just grounds, till he is enabled to from above. But the elect shall be so enabled: they shall be enabled to believe themselves to be what

indeed they are. As for the rest, who are not endued with faith, they shall perish; raging and blaspheming, as you do now. But, say you, these doctrines open a door to ungodliness. I answer, whatever door they may open to the impious and profane, yet they open a door of righteousness to the elect and holy, and shew them the way to heaven, and the path of access unto God. Yet you would have us abstain from the mention of these grand doctrines, and leave our people in the dark, as to their election of God. The consequence of which would be, that every man would bolster himself up with a delusive hope of a share in that salvation, which is supposed to lie open to all; and thus genuine humility, and the practical fear of God, would be kicked out of doors. This would be a pretty way indeed of stoping up the gap Erasmus complains of! Instead of closing up the door of licentiousness, as is falsely pretended, it would be in fact opening a gulf into the nethermost hell. Still you urge, where is either the necessity or utility of preaching predestination? God himself teaches it, and commands *us* to teach it: and that is answer enough. We are not to arraign the Deity, and bring the motives of his will to the test of human scrutiny, but simply to revere both him and it. He, who alone is all-wise and all-just, can in reality (however things appear to us) do wrong to no man; neither

can he do any thing unwisely or rashly. And this consideration will suffice to silence all objections of truly religious pesons. However, let us, for argument's sake, go a step further. I will venture to assign over and above, two very important reasons why these doctrines should be publicly taught: —1st. For the humiliation of our pride, and the manifestation of divine grace. God hath assuredly promised his favors to the truly humble. By *the truly humble*, I mean those who are endued with repentance, and despair of saving themselves: for a man can never be said to be truly penitent and humble, till he is made to know that his salvation is not suspended, in any measure whatever, on his own strength, machinations, endeavors, free-will, or works; but entirely depends on the free pleasure, purpose, determination, and efficiency of another, even of God alone. Whilst a man is persuaded that he has it in his own power to contribute any thing, be it ever so little, to his own salvation, he remains in carnal confidence: he is not a self-despairer, and therefore is not duly humbled before God; so far from it, that he hopes some favorable juncture or opportunity will offer, when he may be able to lend a helping hand to the business of his salvation. On the contrary, whoever is truly convinced that the whole work depends singly and absolutely on the will of God, who alone is the author and

finisher of salvation, such a person despairs of self-assistance: he renounces his own will and his own strength: he waits and prays for the operation of God; nor waits and prays in vain. For the elects' sake, therefore, these doctrines are to be preached; that the chosen of God being humbled by the knowledge of his truths, self-emptied, and sunk into nothing as it were in his presence, may be saved in Christ, with eternal glory. This then is one inducement to the publication of the doctrine, that the penitent may be made acquainted with the promise of grace, and plead it in prayer to God, and receive it as their own. 2d. The nature of the Christian faith requires it. Faith has to do with things not seen. And this is one of the highest degrees of faith, steadfastly to believe that God is infinitely merciful, though he saves comparatively but few, and condemns so many; and that he is strictly just, though of his own will he makes such numbers of mankind necessarily liable to damnation. Now, these are some of the unseen things whereof faith is the evidence. Whereas, were it in my power to comprehend them, or clearly to make out *how* God is both inviolably just, and infinitely merciful, notwithstanding the display of wrath, and seeming inequality in his dispensations, respecting the reprobate, faith would have little or nothing to do. But now since these matters cannot be adequately comprehended

by us, in the present state of imperfection, there is room for the exercise of faith. The truths, therefore, respecting predestination in all its branches should be taught and published: they, no less than the other mysteries of Christian doctrine, being the proper objects of faith on the part of God's people."

Therefore it becomes us, with the apostle, to adore what we cannot comprehend, when he triumphantly exclaims, O! the depths both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

THE END.

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